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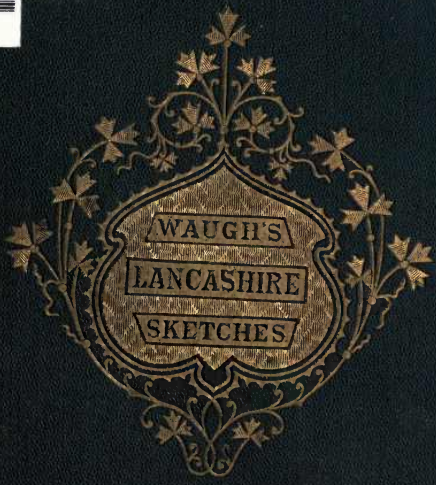

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LANCASHIRE SKETCHES.

BY

EDWIN WAUGH.

THIRD EDITION.

LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO.
MANCHESTER: ALEXANDER IRELAND & CO.
1869.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

IN this volume, relating to a district with which the writer is intimately acquainted, he has gathered up a few points of local interest, and, in connection with these, he has endeavoured to embody something of the traits of present life in South Lancashire with descriptions of its scenery, and with such gleanings from its local history as bore upon the subject, and, under the circumstances, were available to him. How far he has succeeded in writing a book which may be instructive or interesting, he is willing to leave to the judgment of those who know the country and the people it deals with. He is conscious that, in comparison with the fertile peculiarities which Lancashire presents to writers who are able to gather them up, and to use them well, this volume is fragmentary and discursive; yet he believes that, so far as it goes, it will not be wholly unacceptable to native readers.

The historical information, interspersed throughout the volume, has been gleaned from so many sources that it would be a matter of considerable difficulty to give a complete and detailed acknowledgment of it. In every important case, however, this

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acknowledgment has been given, with some degree of care, as fully and clearly as possible, in the course of the work. Some of this historical matter may prove to be ill-chosen, if not ill-used—perhaps in some cases it might have been obtained in a better form, and even more correctly given—but the writer has, at least, the satisfaction of knowing that, with such light as he had, and with such elements as were convenient to him, he has been guided, in his selection of that kind of information, by a desire to obtain the most correct and the most applicable matter which was available to him.

A book which is purely local in its character and bearing, as this is, cannot be expected to have much interest for persons unconnected with the district which it relates to. If there is any hope of its being read at all, that hope is centred there. The subjects it treats upon being local, and the language used in it being often the vernacular of a particular part of the county, these circumstances combine to narrow its circle of acquaintance. But, in order to make that part of it which is given in the dialect as intelligible as possible to all readers not intimate with that form of native language, some care has been taken to explain such words as are unusually ambiguous in form, or in meaning. And here it may be noticed, that persons who know little or nothing of the dialect of Lancashire, are apt to think of it as one in form and sound throughout the county, and expect it to assume one unvaried feature whenever it is represented in writing. This is a mistake, for there often exist considerable shades of difference—even in places not more than eight or ten miles apart—in the expression, and in the form of words which mean the same thing; and, sometimes, the language of a very limited locality, though bearing the same general characteristics as the dialect of the county in general,

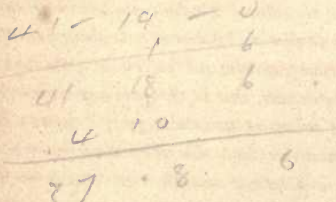
is rendered still more perceptibly distinctive in features, by idioms and proverbs peculiar to that particular spot. In this volume, however, the writer has taken care to give the dialect, as well as he could, in such a form as would convey to the mind of the general reader a correct idea of the mode of pronunciation, and the signification of the idioms, used in the immediate locality which he happens to be writing about.

Lancashire has had some learned writers who have written upon themes generally and locally interesting. But the successful delineation of the quaint and racy features of its humble life has fallen to the lot of very few. John Collier, our sound-hearted and clear-headed native humourist of the last century, left behind him some exquisite glimpses of the manner of life in his own nook of Lancashire, at that time. The little which he wrote, although so eccentric and peculiar in character as to be almost unintelligible to the general reader, contains such evidence of genius, and so many rare touches of nature, that to those who can discern the riches hidden under its quaint vernacular garb, it wears a perennial charm, in some degree akin to that which characterises the writings of such men as Cervantes and De Foe. And, in our own day, Samuel Bamford—emphatically a native man—has, with felicitous truth, transferred to his pages some living pictures of Lancashire life, which will probably be read with more interest even than now, long after the writer has been gathered to his fathers. There are others who have illustrated some of the conditions of social existence in Lancashire, in a graphic manner, with more polish and more learning; but, for native force and truth, John Collier and Samuel Bamford are, probably, the foremost of all genuine expositors of the characteristics of the Lancashire people.

In conclusion, all that has hitherto been done in this way is small in amount, compared with that which is left undone. The past, and still more the disappearing present, of this important district teem with significant features, which, if caught up and truthfully represented, might, perhaps, be useful to the next generation.

E. W.

Manchester.



PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

SINCE the second issue of this volume, the matter it contained has been revised and corrected; and considerable additions have been made thereto. But, even yet, the writer is sensible of many crudities remaining in this, his first venture upon the world of letters. And amongst the new matter which has been added to the present edition, the reader will find, at least, one article—"Saint Catharine's Chapel"—which has no direct connection with a volume of "Lancashire Sketches." He must now, however, leave the book to such fate as awaits it; hoping that, if time and health be granted to him, he may yet do something worthier of the recognition which his efforts have already met with from the people of his native county.

E. W.

Manchester.

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LANCASHIRE SKETCHES.

Chapel Island;

OR,

An Adventure on Ulverstone Sands.

The wills above be done! but I would fain die a dry death.
THE TEMPEST.

I HAVE spent many a pleasant day at the village of Bardsea, three miles south of Ulverstone. It stands close to Conishead Park, high upon a fertile elbow of land, the base of which is washed on two sides by the waters of Morecambe Bay. It is an old hamlet, of about fifty houses, nearly all in one wandering street, which begins at the bottom of a knoll, on the Ulverstone side, and then climbs to a point near the summit, where three roads meet, and where the houses on one side stand back a few yards, leaving an open ground like a little market-place. Upon the top of the knoll, a few yards east of this open space, the church stands, overlooking sea and land all round. From the centre of the village the street winds on towards the beach. At this end a row of neat houses stands at a right angle, upon an eastward incline, facing the sea. The tide washes up within fifty yards of these houses at high water. At the centre of the village, too, half a dozen pleasant cottages leave the street, and stand out, like the fin of a fish, in a quiet lane, which leads down into a little shady glen at the foot

of Birkrigg. The same lane leads, by another route, over the top of that wild hill, into the beautiful vale of Urswick. Bardsea is a pretty, out of the way place, and the country about it is very picturesque and varied. It is close to the sea, and commands a fine view of the bay, and of its opposite shores, for nearly forty miles. About a mile west of the village, Birkrigg rises high above green pastures and leafy dells that lap his feet in beauty. Northward, the road to Ulverstone leads through the finest part of Conishead Park, which begins near the end of the village. This park is one of the most charming pieces of undulant woodland scenery I ever beheld. An old writer calls it "the Paradise of Furness." On the way to Ulverstone, from Bardsea, the Leven estuary shows itself in many a beautiful gleam through the trees of the park; and the fells of Cartmel are in full view beyond. It is one of the pleasantest, one of the quietest walks in the kingdom.

The last time I saw Bardsea it was about the middle of July. I had gone there to spend a day or two with a friend. There had not been a cloud on the heavens for a week; and the smell of new hay came on every sigh that stirred the leaves. The village looked like an island of sleepy life, with a sea of greenery around it, surging up to the very doors of its white houses, and flinging the spray of nature's summer harmonies all over the place. The songs of birds, the rustle of trees, the ripple of the brook at the foot of the meadows, and the murmur of the sea, all seem to float together through the nest of man, making it drowsy with pleasure. It was fairly lapped in soothing melody. Every breath of air brought music on its wings; and every song was laden with sweet smells. Nature loved the little spot, for she caressed it and croodled about it, like a mother singing lullabies to a tired child. And Bardsea was pleased and still, as if it knew it all. It seemed the enchanted ear of the landscape; for everywhere else the world was alive with the jocund restlessness of the season. My friend and I wandered about from morning to night. In the heat of the day the white roads glared in the sun; and, in some places, the air seemed to tremble at about a man's height from the ground, as I have seen it tremble above a burning kiln sometimes. But for broad day we had the velvet glades and shady woods of Conishead to ramble in; and many a rich old lane, and some green dells, where little brooks ran whimpling their tiny undersongs. in liquid trebles, between banks

of nodding wild flowers. Our evening walks were more delightful still; for when soft twilight came, melting the distinctions of the landscape in her dreamy loveliness, she had hardly time to draw "a thin veil o'er the day" before sea and land began to shine again under the radiance of the moon. Wandering among such scenes, at such a time, was enough to touch any man's heart with gratitude for the privilege of existence in this world of ours.

My friend's house stands upon a buttressed shelf of land, halfway up the slope which leads from the shore into Bardsea. It is the most seaward dwelling of the place; and it is bowered about on three sides with little plots of garden, one of them kept as a playground for the children. It commands a glorious view of the bay, from Hampsfell, all round by Arnside and Lancaster, down to Fleetwood. Sometimes, at night, I have watched the revolutions of the Fleetwood light, from the front of the house, whilst listening to the surge of the tide along the shore, at the foot of the hill.

One day, when dinner was over, we sat down to smoke at an open window, which looked out upon the bay. It was about the turning of the tide, for a fisherman's cart was coming slowly over the sands, from the nets at low water. The day was unusually hot; but, before we had smoked long, I felt as if I couldn't rest any longer indoors.

"Where shall we go this afternoon?" said I, knocking the ashes out of my pipe upon the outside sill.

"Well," replied my friend, "I have been thinking that we couldn't do better than stroll into the park a while. What do you say?"

"Agreed," said I. "It's a bonny piece of woodland. I dare say many a Roman soldier has been pleased with the place, as he marched through it, sixteen centuries ago."

"Perhaps so," said he, smiling, and taking his stick from the corner; "but the scene must have been very different then. Come along."

At the garden gate we found three of his flaxen-headed children romping with a short-legged Scotch terrier, called "Trusty." The dog's wild eyes shone in little slits of dusky fire through the rusty thicket of gray hair which overhung them. "Trusty" was beside himself with joy when we came into the road; and he worried our shoes. and shook our trousers' slops

in a sham fury, as if they were imaginary rats; and he bounced about and barked, till the quiet scene, from Bardsea to Birkrigg, rang with his noisy glee. Some of the birds about us seemed to stop singing for a few seconds, and, after they had taken an admiring look sideway at the little fellow, they burst out again louder than ever, and in more rollicking strains, heartily infected with the frisky riot of that little four-legged marlocker. Both the dog and the children clamoured to go with us. My friend hesitated as first one, then another, tugged at him, and said: "Pa, let me go." Turning to me, he scratched his head, and said: "I've a good mind to take Willie." The lad instantly gave a twirl round on one heel, and clapped his hands, and then laid hold of his father's coat-lap, by way of clenching the bargain at once. But, just then, his mother appeared at the gate, and said: "Eh, no, Willie, you'd better not go. You'll be so tired. Come, stay with me. That's a good boy." Willie let go his hold slowly, and fell back with a disappointed look. "Trusty" seemed to know that there was a hitch in the matter, for he suddenly became quieter; and, going up to Willie, he licked his hands consolingly, and then, sitting down beside him, he looked round from one to another, to see how the thing was to end.

"Don't keep tea waiting for us," said my friend, "we'll be back in time for an early supper."

"Very well," replied his good wife; "we'll have something nice. Don't be late."

The dog was now whining and wrestling in the arms of Willie, who was holding him back. We made our bows, and bade "Good-bye" to the children and to their mother, and then turned up the road. Before we had got many yards, she called out:—

"I say, Chris., if you go as far as Ulverstone, call at Mrs. Seatle's, and at Town and Fell's, for some things which I ordered. Bella Rigg can bring them down in her cart. These children want a new skipping rope, too: and you might bring something for Willie."

The little girls begun to dance about, shaking their sunny locks, and singing, "Eh, a new skipping rope! a new skipping rope!" Then the youngest seized her father's hand, and cocking up her rosy button-hole of a mouth, she said, "Pa! Pa! lift me up! I want to tell you somefin."

"Well; what is it, pet?" said he, taking her in his arms.

Clipping his neck as far as she could, she said, "Div me a tis,

first." And then she whispered in his ear, "If—you'll—buy—me—a *big* doll, I'll sing, 'Down in a low and drassy bed,' four times, when you tum home,—*now* then. 'Trusty' eated my odder doll, when we was playin' shop in de dardin." And then he had to kiss them again, and promise—I know not what.

Once more we said "Good bye," and walked up towards the white village; the chime of sweet voices sinking into a silvery hum as we got farther off. Everything in Bardsea was unusually still. Most of the doors and windows were open; and, now and then, somebody peeped out as we passed by, and said it was "a fine day." Turning round to look at the sands, we saw the dumpy figure of "Owd Manuel," the fisherman, limping up from the foot of the slope, with his coat slung upon his arm. The old man stopped, and wiped his forehead, and gave his crutch a flourish, by way of salutation. We waved our hats in reply, and went on. At the centre of the village stands the comfortable inn, kept by "Old Gilly," the quaint veteran who, after spending the prime of manhood in hard service among the border smugglers, has settled down to close the evening of his life in this retired nest. Here, too, all was still, except the measured sound of a shoemaker's hammer, ringing out from the open door of a cottage, where "Cappel" sat at his bench, beating time upon a leather sole to the tune of a country song. And, on the shady side, next door to the yard wall, which partly encloses the front of the old inn, the ruddy, snow-capped face and burly figure of "Old Tweedler" was visible, as still as a statue. He was in his shirt sleeves, leaning against the door-cheek of his little grocery shop, smoking a long pipe, and looking dreamily at the sunny road. "Tweedler" needs a good deal of wakening at any time; but when he is once fairly wakened, he is a tolerable player on the clarionet, and not a very bad fiddler; and he likes to talk about his curious wanderings up and down the kingdom with show-folk. When the old man had found us out, and had partly succeeded in getting his heavy limbs into a mild disposition to move, he sidled forth from his little threshold, and came towards us, gurgling something from his throat that was not unlike the low growl of an old hoarse dog. His gruff, slow-motioned voice sounded clear all around, waking the echoes of the sleepy houses, as he said, "Well,—gen-tle-men. What? Wheer are you for,—to-day?" We told him that we were going down to the Priory, for a stroll; but we should like to call at "Gilly's" first, for a

few minutes, if he would go in with us. "Well," said he; "it's a very het day an' I don't mind hevin' an odd gill. In wi' ye,—an' I'll follow—in a minute," and then he sidled back to his nest.

There was not a sound of life in "Old Gilly's" house; but the trim cap of his kind dame was visible inside, bobbing to and fro by the window of the little bar. "Gilly," in his kind-hearted way, always calls her "Mammy." We looked in at the bar, and the old lady gave us a cordial welcome. "My good-man has just gone to lie down," said she; "but I'll go and tell him." We begged that she would let him rest, and bring us three glasses of her best ale. The sun shone in strongly at the open back door. At the rear of the house, there is a shady verandah, and a garden in front of it. There we sat down, looking at the bright bay. The city of Lancaster was very distinct, on the opposite side of the water, more than twenty miles off. In a few minutes we heard "Tweedler's cart-horse tread, as he came through the lobby, with two books in his hand.

"There," said he, handing one of them to me; "I've turned that up amang a lot o' lumber i't house. I warnd it's just the thing for ye. What the devil is't, think ye? For it's past my skill."

It was an old, well-thumbed Latin Delectus, with one back off, and several leaves gone. It was not of much use to me; but when the old man said, "Now, that's a fine book, I'll awarnd, an' I'll mak' ye a present on't," I felt bound to receive it thankfully; and I did so.

"An' this," said he, holding up the other; "is a book o' sangs. Cummerlan' sangs."

It was a thin volume, in papered boards—a cheap edition of Anderson's ballads—printed in double column, royal octavo.

"Ay," replied my friend; I should like to look at that."

"Varra well," said Tweedler; "put it i' your pocket. I'll land it ye." And then, as if half-repenting, he continued, "But I set a deal o' store o' that book. I don't think as I could get another for ony money."

"You shall have it back in a day or two," said my friend.

"Oh," replied Tweedler, "it's all reight wi' ye. But I wouldn't ha' lant it onybody, mind ye."

My friend put the book in his pocket, promising to take especial care of it; and then we drank up, and came away; and Tweedler sauntered back to lean against the door-cheek, and smoke

It was about half-past one when we walked out at the landward end of the village. The only person we met was a horseman, riding hastily up from the skirt of the park. As he sped by I recognised the tall figure and benevolent face of Dr. Anderson, of Ulverstone. Near Bardsea Hall an old lane leads off at the right-hand of the road, down to the sea-beach, from whence there is a pleasant walk along the shore of the Leven estuary, to a little fishing village, called Sandside, and thence a good road, between meadow lands, up into Ulverstone. After a minute's conversation, at the end of this lane, we agreed to go that way. When we came out upon the shore, my friend stopped, and looked across the sands.

"Was you ever on Chapel Island?" said he, pointing towards it.

"No," replied I; "but I should like to see that spot. Are there any remains of the old chantry left?"

"A few," said he; "mostly incorporated with the house of a fisherman who lives on the island. But we'll go over to it. There's nice time to get across before the tide comes in. It's not much more than a mile."

I was pleased with the idea of seeing this little historic island, of which I had read and heard so much; so we strode out towards it at once. The sands between looked as level as a bowling-green, and perfectly dry; and it did not seem to me more than half the distance my friend had said. Before we had gone many yards he began a story:—

"The last time I was on the island there were several friends—But hold! we had better take something to eat and drink. They'll have next to nothing there; and we shall have to stop till the next ebb. Wait here. I'll run back. I shan't be many minutes." And away he went to the green lane.

There was an old black boat on the sands, close to where he had left me. I got into it, and, pulling my hat over my eyes to shade the sun away, I lay down on my back and listened to the birds in Conishead Park. It was something more than a quarter of an hour before he appeared at the end of the lane again, with a brown bottle in one hand and with pockets well stored. Without stopping an instant, he walked right out upon the sands, wiping the perspiration from his brow as he went. Staring straight at the island, he said, "Come on. We've no time to lose, now. But we can manage it." I remember

fancying that there was an unusual earnestness in the tone of his voice; but I did not think much more about it at the time, for the sands still seemed quite dry between us and the island; so I followed him in silence, looking round at the beautiful scene, with my mind at ease. My friend was a tall, lithe man, in the prime of life, and a very good walker. I had not been well for some days previous, and I began to feel that the rate he was going at was rather too much for me. Besides, I had a pair of heavy, double-soled boots on, and my thick coat was loaded with books and papers. But I laboured on, perspiring freely. I thought that I could manage well enough to keep up with him for the distance we had to go. In a few minutes we began to come to patches of wet sand, where the feet sank at every step, and our progress was slower, though a good deal more difficult. We did not seem to get much nearer the island, though we were walking so hard. This tried me still more; and, not seeing any need for such a desperate hurry, I said, "Don't go so fast!" But he kept up the pace, and, pointing to where a white sail was gliding up the other side of the island, towards Ulverstone, he said, "Come along! The main channel's filling! We've a channel to cross on this side, yet. D'ye see yon white line? It's the tide rushing in! Come on! We can't turn back now!" It was only then that I began to see how we were situated; and I tramped on at his heels, through the soft wet sand, perspiring and panting, and still without seeming to get over much ground. In a few minutes we came to a shallow channel, about eight or ten yards across. We splashed through, without speaking. It only took us a little above the knee; but, I perceived that the water was rising rapidly. Thinking that the danger was over, I stammered out, "Stop! Slacken a bit! We're all right now!" But the tone, as well as the words of his reply, startled me, as he shot ahead, crying, "This is not it! This is nothing! Come on!" I was getting exhausted; and, when he cried out, "Double!" and broke into a run, I had not breath to spare for an answer; but I struggled on desperately. The least false step would have brought me down; and, if I had fallen, I think that even that delay would have been more than we had to spare. Three or four minutes brought us up to the channel he had spoken of. It was an old bed of the river Leven. It must have been from fifteen to twenty yards wide at that moment, and the tide was increasing it at a terrible rate. When we got to the

edge of the water, I was so done up that I panted out: "Stop! I can't go so fast!" But my friend turned half round, with a wild look, and almost screamed: "But you must! It's death!" Then we went into the water, without any more words. I was a little on one side of him, and about two yards in the rear. It is a wonder to me now how I got through that deep, strong, tidal current. The water must have revived me a little, unconsciously to myself, at the time. Before we had got to the middle, I saw the book of ballads in the side pocket of my friend's shooting coat disappearing in the water as he went deeper into the channel. My clothes began to grow heavy, and the powerful action of the tide swayed me about so much that I could hardly keep my feet, and I expected every moment being whelmed over. But somehow I strove on, the water deepening at every step. A thousand thoughts crowded into my mind whilst wading that channel. I remember distinctly the terrible stillness of the scene; the frightful calm of the blue sky; the rocky island, with its little grove of trees, waving gracefully in the sunshine—all so beautiful, yet all looking down with such a majestic indifference upon us, as we wrestled for life with the rising tide. About mid-channel, when the water was high up my breast, my friend gave a wild shout for help, and I instantly did the same. The island was not much more than forty yards off. As my friend turned his head, I caught a glimpse of his haggard look, and I thought all was over The rocks re-echoed our cries; but everything was still as death, except the little grove of trees waving in the sunshine. There was not a living soul in sight. My heart sank, and I remember feeling, for an instant, as if it was hardly worth while struggling any longer. And here let me bear testimony to a brave act on the part of my friend. In the deepest part of the channel, when the water was near the top of my shoulders, he put out his stick sideway, and said, "Get hold!" I laid only a feeble grasp upon it, for I had enough to do to keep my feet. When we had waded about three yards in this way, we began to see that we were ascending the opposite bank rapidly, for it was steeper than the other one. In two minutes more we were out upon the dry sands, with our clothes clinging heavily about us, and our hearts beating wild with mingled emotions. "Now," said I, panting for breath, "let's sit down a minute." "No, no!" replied he in a resolute tone, pushing on; "come farther off." A walk of about thirty

yards brought us to the foot of the rocks. We clambered painfully up from stone to stone, till we came upon a little footpath which led through the grove and along the garden to the old fisherman's cottage, on the north side of the island. As we entered the grove I found that my friend had kept hold of the brown bottle all the way. I did not notice this till we came to the first patch of grassy ground, where he flung the bottle down and walked on. He told me afterwards that he believed it had helped to steady him whilst coming through the channel.

The fisherman's cottage is the only dwelling on the little island. We found the door open, and the birds were singing merrily among the green bushes about the entrance. There was nobody in but the old fisherman's wife, and she was deaf. We might have shouted long enough before she could have heard us; and if she had heard, the poor old body could hardly have helped us. When we got to the door, she was busy with something at the fire, and she did not hear our approach. But, turning round, and seeing us standing there, she gazed a few seconds with a frightened look, and then, lifting up both hands, she cried out, "Eh, dear o' me; good folk! Whativver's to do? Whereivver han yo cum fra? Eh; heawivver han yo getten ower?"

We told our tale in a few words; and then she began again:—

"Good lorjus days, childer! What browt yo through t' channel at sich an ill time as this? It's a marcy 'at yo weren't draan'd mony a time ower! It mud ha' bin my awn lads! Eh, what trouble there'd ha' bin for someb'dy. What, ye'll ha' mothers livin', likely; happen wives and childer? . . Eh, dear o' me! Bud cum in wi' ye! Whativver are ye stonnin' theer for? Cum in, an' get your claes off—do! an' get into bed this minute," said she, pointing to a little, low-roofed room in the oldest part of the house.

The water from our clothes was running over the floor; but when we spoke about it in the way of apology, the old woman said, "Nivver ye mind 't watter. Ye've had watter enough for yance, I should think. Get in theer, I tell ye; an' tak' your weet claes off. Now, don't stan' gabblin', but creep into bed, like good lads; an' I'll bring ye some het tea to drink. . . Eh, but ye owt to be thankful 'at ye are wheer ye are! . . Ye'd better go into that inside room; It'll be quieter. Leave your claes i' this nar room, an' I'll hing 'em up to dry. An' put

some o' thoose aad shirts on. They're poor, but they're comfortable. Now, in wi' ye! ye can talk at efter."

The old woman had four grown-up sons, labourers and fishermen; and there was plenty of working clothes belonging to them, lying about the bedroom. After we had stript our wet things, and flung them down, one after another, with a splash, we put on a rough shirt a-piece, and crept into bed. In a few minutes she came in with a quart pitcher full of hot tea, and a cup to drink it from; and, setting it down upon a chair at the bedside, she said, "Now, get that into ye, and hev a bit of a sleep. Eh, dear o' me! It's a marcy ye warn't draan'd!"

We lay still, talking and looking about us; but we could not sleep. The excitement we had gone through had left a band of intense pain across the lower part of my forehead, as if a hot wire was burning into it. The walls of the room we lay in were partly those of the ancient chapel which gives name to the island. In fact, the little ragged, weed-grown belfrey still stood above our heads, almost the only relic of the ruined chantry, except the foundations, and some pieces of the old walls built up into the cottage. This chapel was founded above five centuries ago, by the monks of Furness. Here they prayed daily "for the safety of the souls of such as crossed the sands with the morning tide." The Priory of Conishead was charged with the maintenance of guides across this estuary, which is perhaps the most dangerous part of the Morecambe Sands. Baines says of the route across these sands: "The tract is from Holker Hall to Plumpton Hall, keeping Chapel Island a little to the left; and the mind of a visitor is filled with a mixture of awe and gratitude when, in a short time after he has traversed this estuary, almost dry shod, he beholds the waters advancing into the bay, and bearing stately vessels towards the harbour of Ulverstone, over the very path which he has so recently trodden." I can imagine how solemn the pealing of that little island chapel's bell must have sounded upon the shores of the estuary, floating over those dangerous waters its daily warning of the uncertainty of human life. Perhaps the bodies of drowned men might have lain where we were lying; or travellers rescued from the tide by those ancient ministers of religion might have listened with grateful hearts to the prayers and thanksgivings offered up in that venerable chantry. The chastening interest of old pious usage clings

to the little island still; and it stands in the midst of the waters, preaching in mute eloquence to every thoughtful mind. There was something in the sacred associations of the place; there was something in the mouldering remnant of the little chapel, which helped to deepen the interest of our eventful visit that day. We could not sleep. The sun shone in aslant at the one tiny window of our bedroom, and the birds were singing merrily outside. As we lay there, thinking and talking about these things, my friend said, "I feel thankful now that I did not bring Willie with me. If I had done so, nothing could have saved us. The tide had come in behind, and a minute more at the channel would have been too much."

After resting about three hours, we got up, and put on some of the cast-off clothes which had been worn by the old woman's sons whilst working in the land. My trousers were a good deal too long, and they were so stiff with dried slutch that they almost stood up of themselves. When they were on, I felt as if I was dressed in sheet-iron. I never saw two stranger figures than we cut that day, as we entered the kitchen again, each amusing himself with the other's comical appearance.

"Never ye mind," said the old woman; "there's naabody to see ye bud mysel; ye may think varra weel 'at ye're alive to wear owt at all. But sart'ny ye looken two bonny baygles! I daat varra mich whether your awn folk would knaw ye. It quite alters your fayturs. I should't tak ye to be aboon ninepence to t' shillin' at the varra most. As for ye," said she, addressing myself, "ye'n na 'casion to talk, for ye're as complete a flay-crow as ivver I set e'en on,"

The kitchen was cleaned up, and the things emptied from our pockets lay about. Here books and papers were opened out to dry There stockings hung upon a line, and our boots were reared against the fender, with their soles turned to the fire. On the dresser two little piles of money stood, and on a round table were the sandwiches and hard-boiled eggs which my friend had brought in his pockets.

"What are ye for wi' this?" said the old woman, pointing to the eatables. "One or two o't eggs are crushed a bit, but t' ham's naa warse, 'at I can see."

"Let us taste what it is like," said my friend.

"That's reight," replied she; an' ye'll hev a cup o' het tea to it. I have it ready here."

The tea was very refreshing; but we couldn't eat much, for we had not quite recovered from the late excitement After a little meal, we went out to walk upon the island. Our damp clothes were fluttering upon the green bushes about the cottage. They were drying fast; for, though the sun was hot, a cool breeze swept over the bay from the south-west. We wandered through the grove, and about the garden, or rather the "kail-yard," for the chief things grown in it were potatoes, cabbages, brocoli, pot-herbs, and such like things, useful at dinner time. There were very few flowers in it, and they were chiefly such as had to take care of themselves. In the grove there were little bowery nooks, and meandering footpaths, mostly worn by visitors from the neighbouring shores The island has been much larger than it is now. Great quantities of limestone rock have been sold, and carried away to the mainland; and it seems as if this little interesting leaf of local history was fated to ultimate destruction in that way. We walked all round it, and then we settled down upon a grassy spot, at the south-western edge, overlooking the channel we had waded through. There was something solemn in the thought that, instead of gazing upon the beautiful bay, we might have been lying at that moment in the bed of the channel there, with the sunny waters rippling above us, or drifting out with the retiring tide to an uncrowded grave in the western sea. The thick woods of Conishead looked beautiful on the opposite shore, with the white turrets of the Priory rising out of their embowering shades. A little south of that the spire of Bardsea church pointed heaven-ward from the summit of a green hill, marking the spot where the village stood hidden from our view. White sails were gliding to and fro upon the broad bay, like great swans with sunlit wings. It was a beautiful scene. We sat looking at it till we began to feel chill, and then we went back to the cottage.

About six o'clock the old fisherman returned home from Ulverstone; and, soon after, two of his sons arrived from Conishead Park, where they had been working at a deep drain. They were tall, hardy-looking men, about middle-age. The old fisherman, who knows the soundings of the sands all round, seemed to think we had picked our way to the island as foolishly as it was possible to do. He talked about the matter as if we had as good a knowledge of the sands as himself, and had set out with the express intention of doing a dangerous exploit.

"Now," said he, pointing a good way north of the way we had crossed, "if ye'd ha' come o'er by theer, ye mud ha' done it easy. Bud, what the devil, ye took the varra warst nook o't channel. *I* wonder as ye weren't *draan'd*. I've helped to get mony a ane aat o' that hole—baith deead an' alive. I yence pulled a captain aat by th' yure o't' yed, as had sailed all ower t' warld, nearly. An' we'd summat to do to bring him raand, an' all. He was that far geean. . . Now, if ye'd ha' getten upo' yon bank," continued he, "ye mud ha' managed to ha' studden till help had come to ye. What, ye wadn't ha' bin varra mich aboon t' middle. . . . But it's getten near law watter. I mun be off to t' nets. Will ye go daan wi' me?"

There were two sets of "stake nets" belonging to the island; one on the north end, and the other on the western side, in our own memorable channel. The sons went to those on the north; and the old man took a stick in his hand, and a large basket on his arm, and we followed him down the rocks to the other nets. They are great cages of strong network, supported by lofty poles, or stakes, from which they take their name. They are so contrived that the fish can get into them at high water, but cannot escape with the retiring tide. There was rather more than a foot of water at the bottom of the nets; but there was not a fish visible, till the old man stepped in; and then I saw that flukes lay thick about the bottom, half-hidden in the sand. We waded in, and helped to pick them up, till the great basket was about half full. He then closed the net, and came away, complaining that it was "nobbut a poor catch." When we got to the cottage we put on our own clothes, which were quite dry. And, after we had picked out two dozen of the finest flukes, which the old man strung upon a stout cord for ease of carriage, we bade adieu to the fisherman and his family, and we walked away over the sands, nearly by the way we had come to the island.

The sun had gone down behind old Birkrigg; but his westering splendour still empurpled the rugged tops of the Cartmel hills. The woods of Conishead were darkening into shade; and the low of cattle came, mellowed by distance, from the rich pastures of Furness. It was a lovely evening. Instead of going up the green lane which leads to the landward end of Bardsea, we turned southward, along the shore, and took a grass-grown shady path, which winds round the sea-washed base of the hill upon

which the church stands and so up into the village by a good road from the beach. The midges were dancing their airy rounds; the throstle's song began to ring clearer in the stilling woods; and the lone ouzel, in her leafy covert, chanted little fits of complaining melody, as if she had lost something. There were other feathered lingerers here and there in those twilight woods, not willing yet to go to rest, through unwearied joyfulness of heart, and still singing on, like children late at play, who have to be called in by their mothers as night comes on. When we drew near my friend's house, he said, 'Now, we had better not mention this little affair to our people." But, as we sat at supper that night, I could not help feeling thankful that we were eating fish instead of being eaten by them.

Ramble from Bury to Rochdale.

"Its hardly in a body's pow'r
To keep, at times' fra being sour."
BURNS.

ONE fine afternoon, at the end of February, I had some business to do in Bury, which kept me there till evening. As twilight came on, the skies settled slowly into a gorgeous combination of the grandest shapes and hues, which appeared to canopy the country for miles around. The air was clear, and it was nipping cold; and every object within sight stood out in beautiful relief in that fine transparence, softened by the deepening shades of evening. The world seemed to stand still and meditate, and inhale silently the air of peace which pervaded that tranquil hour of closing day, as if all things on earth had caught the spirit of "meek nature's evening comments on the fuming shows and vanities of man." The glare of daylight is naturally fitted for bustle and business, but such an eventide as this looked the very native hour of devout thought, and recovery from the details of worldly occupation. It is said that the town of Bury takes its name from the Saxon word *byri*, a burgh, or castle. One of the twelve ancient Saxon fortresses of Lancashire stood in the place now called "Castle Croft," close to the town, and upon the banks of the old course of the river Irwell. Immediately below the eminence, upon which the castle once stood, a low tract of ground, of considerable extent, stretches away from below the semicircular ridge upon which the northern extremity of the town is situated, up the valley of the Irwell. Less than fifty years ago this tract was a great stagnant swamp, where, in certain states of the weather the people of the neighbourhood

could see the weird antics of the "Wild Fire," or "Jack o' Lantern," that fiend of morass and fen. An old medical gentleman, of high repute, who has lived his whole life in the town, lately assured me that he remembers well that, during the existence of that poisonous swamp, there was a remarkable prevalence of fever and ague amongst the people living in its neighbourhood; which diseases have since then comparatively disappeared from the locality. There is something rich in excellent suggestions in the change which has been wrought in that spot. The valley, so long fruitful of pestilences, is now drained and cleared, and blooms with little garden allotments, belonging to the working people thereabouts. Oft as I chance to pass that way, on Saturday afternoons, or holidays, there they are, working in their little plots, sometimes assisted by their children, or their wives; a very pleasant scene.

I lingered in the market-place a little while, looking at the parish church, with its new tower and spire, and at the fine pile of new stone buildings, consisting of the Derby Hotel, the Town Hall, and the Athenæum. South Lancashire has, for a very long time past, been chiefly careful about its hard productive work, and practicable places to do it in; and has taken little thought about artistic ornament of any sort; but the strong old county palatine begins to flower out a little here and there, and this will increase as the wealth of the county becomes influenced by elevated taste. In this new range of buildings, there was a stateliness and beauty, which made the rest of the town of Bury look smaller and balder than ever it seemed to me before. It looked like a piece of the west end of London, dropped among a cluster of weavers' cottages. But my reflections took another direction. At "The Derby," there, thought I, will be supplied—to anybody who can command "the one thing needful"—sumptuous eating and drinking, fine linen, and downy beds, hung with damask curtaining; together with grand upholstery, glittering chandelier and looking-glass, and more than enough of other ornamental garniture of all sorts; a fine cook's shop and dormitory, where a man might make shift to tickle a few of his five senses very prettily, if he was so disposed. A beggar is not likely to put up there; but a lord might chance to go to bed there, and dream that he was a beggar. At the other end of these fine buildings, the new Athenæum was quietly rising into the air. The wants to be provided for in that edifice were

quite of another kind. There is in the town of Bury, as, more or less, everywhere, a sprinkling of naturally active and noble minds, struggling through the hard crust of ignorance and difficulty, towards mental light and freedom. Such salt as this poor world of ours has in it, is not unfrequently found among these humble strugglers. I felt sure that such as these, at least, would watch the laying of the stones of this new Athenæum with a little interest. That is their grand citadel, thought I; and from thence, the artillery of a few old books shall help to batter tyranny and nonsense about the ears;—for there is a reasonable prospect that there, the ample page of knowledge, "rich with the spoils of time," will be unfolded to all who desire to consult it; and that from thence the seeds of thought may yet be sown over a little space of the neighbouring mental soil. This fine old England of ours will some day find, like the rest of the world, that it is not mere wealth and luxury, and dexterous juggling among the legerdemain of trade, that make and maintain its greatness, but intelligent and noble-hearted men, in whatever station of life they grow; and they are, at least, sometimes found among the obscure, unostentatious, and very poor. It will learn to prize these, as the "pulse of the machine," and to cultivate them as the chief hope of its future existence and glory; and will carefully remove, as much as possible, all unnecessary difficulties from the path of those who, from a wise instinct of nature, are impelled in the pursuit of knowledge by pure love of it, for its own sake, and not by sordid aims.

The New Town Hall is the central building of this fine pile. The fresh nap was not yet worn off it; and, of course, its authorities were anxious to preserve its pristine Corinthian beauty from the contaminations of "the unwashed." They had made it nice, and they wanted none but nice people in it. At the "free exhibition" of models for the Peel monument, a notice was posted at the entrance, warning visitors, that "Persons in Clogs" would not be admitted. There are some Town Halls which are public property, in the management of which a kindred solicitude prevails about mere ornaments of wood and stone, or painting, gilding, and plaster work; leading to such restrictions as tend to lessen the service which they might afford to the whole public. They are kept rather too exclusively for grandee-festivals; and gatherings of those classes which are too much sundered from the poor by a Chinese wall of exclusive feeling.

I have known the authorities of such places make "serious objections to evening meetings;" and yet, I have often seen the farce of "public meetings" got up ostensibly for the discussion of some important question then agitating the population of the neighbourhood, inviting *public* discussion, at *eleven* o'clock in the *forenoon*, an hour when the heterodox multitude would be secure enough at their labour; and, in this way, many a pack of fanatic hounds—and there are some such in all parties—have howled out their hour with a clear stage and no foe; and then walked off glorying in a sham triumph, leaving nothing beaten behind them but the air they have tainted with *ex parte* denunciation. And, in my erroneous belief that this Town Hall, into which "Persons in Clogs" were not to be admitted, was public property, the qualification test seemed to be of a queer kind, and altogether at the wrong end of the man. Alas, for these poor lads who wear clogs and work-soiled fustian garments; it takes a moral Columbus, every now and then, to keep the world awake to a belief that there is something fine in them, which has been running to waste for want of recognition and culture. Blessed and beautiful are the feet, which fortune has encased in the neat "Clarence," of the softest calf or Cordovan, or the glossy "Wellington," of fine French leather. Even so; the woodenest human head has a better chance in this world, if it come before us covered with a good-looking hat. But woe unto your impertinent curiosity, ye unfortunate clog-wearing lovers of the fine arts!—(I was strongly assured that there were several curious specimens of this strange animal extant among the working people of Bury.) It was pleasant to hear, however, that several of these ardent persons, of questionable understanding, meeting with this warning as they attempted to enter the hall, after duly contemplating it with humourous awe, doffed their condemned clogs at once, and, tucking the odious timber under their arms, ran up the steps in their stocking-feet. It is a consolation to believe that these clogs of theirs are not the only clogs yet to be taken off in this world of ours. But, as this "Town Hall" is private property, and, as it has been settled by somebody in the north that "a man can do what he likes with his own," these reflections are, perhaps, more pertinent to other public halls that I know of than to this one.

In one of the windows of "The Derby" was exhibited a representation of "The Eagle and Child," or, as the country-

folk in Lancashire sometimes call it, "Th' Brid and Bantlin'," the ancient recognizance of the Stanleys, Earls of Derby, and formerly kings of the Isle of Man, with their motto, "Sans changer," in a scroll beneath. This family still owns the manor of Bury, and has considerable possessions there. They have also large estates and great influence in the north and west of Lancashire. In former times they have been accounted the most powerful family of the county; and in some of the old wars, they led to the field all the martial chivalry of Lancashire and Cheshire under their banner. As I looked on the Stanley's crest, I thought of the fortunes of that noble house, and of the strange events which it had shared with the rest of the kingdom. Of James, Earl of Derby, who was beheaded at Bolton-le-Moors, in front of the Man and Scythe Inn, in Deansgate, two centuries since; and of his countess, Charlotte de Tremouille, who so bravely defended Lathom House against the parliamentary forces during the last civil wars. She was daughter to Claude, Duke of Tremouille, and Charlotte Brabantin de Nassau, daughter of William, Prince of Orange, and Charlotte de Bourbon, of the royal house of France. Apart from the pride of famous descent, both the earl and his lady were remarkable for certain noble qualities of mind, which commanded the respect of all parties in those troubled times. I sometimes think that if it had pleased Heaven for me to have lived in those days, I should have been compelled by nature to fall into some Roundhead rank, and do the best I could, for that cause. When a lad at school I had this feeling: and, as I poured over the history of that period, I well remember how, in my own mind, I shouted the solemn battle-cry with great Cromwell and his captains, and charged with the earnest Puritans, in their bloody struggles against the rampant tyrannies of the time. Yet, even then, I never read of this James, Earl of Derby—the faithful soldier of an infatuated king—without a feeling of admiration for the chivalry of his character. I lately saw, in Bolton, an antique cup of "stone china," quaintly painted and gilt, out of which it is said that he drank the communion immediately before his execution. Greenhalgh, of Brandlesome, who was a notable and worthy man, and who governed the Isle of Man for the Earls of Derby, lived at Brandlesome Hall, near Bury. Respecting Edward, the third earl, Camden says: "With Edward, Earl of Derby's death, the glory of hospitality seemed to fall

asleep." Of his munificent housekeeping, too, he tells us: how he fed sixty old people twice a day, every day, and all comers twice a week; and every Christmas-day, for thirty-two years, supplied two thousand seven hundred with meat, drink, money, and money's worth; and how he offered to raise ten thousand soldiers for the king. Also, that he had great reputation as a bone-setter, and was a learned man, a poet, and a man of considerable talent in many directions. The present Lord Stanley* is accounted a man of great ability as a politician and orator, and of high and impetuous spirit; and is the leader of the Conservative party in parliament. A century ago, the influence of great feudal families, like the Stanleys, was all but supreme in Lancashire; but, since that time, the old landlord domination has declined in the manufacturing districts; and the people have begun to set more value upon their independent rights as men, than upon the painful patronage of feudal landlords.

I had no time to devote to any other of the notabilities of Bury town; and I thought that "Chamber Hall," the birth-place of the great departed statesman, Peel, would be worth a special pilgrimage some Saturday afternoon.† I had finished my business about seven o'clock, and, as the nightfall was fine and clear, I resolved to walk over to Rochdale, about six miles off, to see an old friend of mine there. Few people like a country walk better than I do; and being in fair health and spirits, I took the road at once, with my stick in hand, as brisk as a Shetland pony, in good fettle. Striking out at the town-end, I bethought me of an old herbalist, or "yarb doctor," who lived somewhere thereabouts—a genuine dealer in simples, bred up in the hills, on Ashworth Moor, about three miles from the town, and who had made the botany of his native neighbourhood a life-long study. Culpepper's "Herbal" was a favourite book with him, as it is among a great number of the country people of Lancashire, where there are, perhaps, more clever botanists in humble life to be found than in any other part of the

* Succeeded his father, the thirteenth Earl of Derby, in 1851. Has been Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Secretary of State for the Colonies. Accepted office as Premier, in 1851.

† Since that time the people of Bury have erected a monument in their market-place to the memory of this brave-hearted benefactor to his country. The statue itself has a noble and simple appearance, but the pedestal on which it stands looks an insignificant footing for a figure of such proportions, and is a little open to the criticism of "Owd Collop," who said that it looked "like a giant trying to balance hissel' upo' a four-peawnd loaf."

kingdom. Nature and he were familiar friends, for he was a lonely rambler by hill, and clough, and field, at all seasons of the year, and could talk by the hour about the beauties and medicinal virtues of gentian, dandelion, and camomile, or tansy, mountain flax, sanctuary, hyssop, buckbean, wood-betony, and "Robin-run-i'-th'-hedge," and an endless catalogue of other herbs and plants, a plentiful assortment of which he kept by him, either green or in dried bundles, ready for his customers. The country people in Lancashire have great faith in simples, and in simple treatment for their diseases. I well remember that one of their recipes for a common cold is "a wot churn-milk posset, weel sweet'nt, an' a traycle cake to't, at bed-time." They are profound believers in the kindly doctrine expressed in that verse of George Herbert's:—

> "More servants wait on man
> Than he'll take notice of; in ev'ry path
> He treads down what befriends him
> When sickness makes him pale and wan.
> Oh, mighty love! man is one world, and hath
> Another to attend him."

Therefore, our primitive old herb-doctor had in his time driven what he doubtless considered, in his humble way, a pretty gainful trade. And he was not exactly "a doctor-by-guess," as the Scotch say, but a man of good natural parts, and of some insight into human physiology, of great experience and observation in his little sphere, and remarkable for strong common sense and integrity. He was also well acquainted with the habits and the peculiar tone of physical constitution among the people of his neighbourhood. Like his pharmacopæia, his life and manners were simple, and his rude patients had great confidence in him. It was getting dark, and I did not know exactly where to find him, or I should have liked very well to see the old botanist, of whom I had heard a very interesting account in my native town.

When one gets fairly into the country it is fine walking by a clear starlight, when the air is touched with frost, and the ground hard under the foot. I enjoyed all this still more on that old road, which is always rising some knoll, or descending into some quiet clough, where all is so still that one can hear the waters sing among the fields and stunted woods off the wayside. The wind was blowing fresh and keen across Knowl Hill and the heathery wastes of Ashworth and Rooley, those wild

heights which divide the vale of the Roach from the Forest of Rossendale. I stood and looked upon the blue heavens, "fretted with golden fire," and around me upon this impressive night-scene, so finely still and solemn, the effect deepened by the moanings of the wind among the trees. My mind reverted to the crowded city, and I thought to myself—this is rather different to Market-street, in Manchester, on a Tuesday forenoon, about the time of "high change," as I listened to the clear "Wo-up!" of a solitary carter to his horse on the top of the opposite knoll, and heard the latch of a cottage-door lifted, and saw the light from the inside glint forth into the trees below for an instant. It was a homely glimpse, which contrasted beautifully with the sombre grandeur of the night. The cottage-door closed again, the fireside picture was gone; and I was alone on the silent road, with the clear stars looking down.

I generally put off my meals till I get a hint from the inside; and, by the time that I reached the bottom of a lonely dell, about three miles on the road, I began to feel hungry, and I stepped into the only house thereabouts, a little roadside inn, to get a bite of something. The house stands near to a narrow woody ravine, which runs under the highway at that place. It is said to have been entirely built by one man, who got the stone, hewed it, cut the timber, and shaped it, and altogether built the house, such as it is; and it has an air of primitive rudeness about it, which partly corroborates the story. The very hearth-flag is an old gravestone, brought from the yard of some ancient moorland chapel: and part of the worn lettering is visible upon it still It is known tc the scattered inhabitants of that district by the name of "The house that Jack built." On entering the place, I found the front room dark and quiet, and nothing stirring but in the kitchen, where I saw the light of a candle, and heard a little music among the pots, which somebody was washing. The place did not seem promising, so far as I could see at all, but I felt curious, and, walking forward, I found a very homely-looking old woman bustling about there, with a clean cap on, not crimped nor frilled any way, but just plainly adorned with a broad border of those large, stiff, old-fashioned puffs, which I used to watch my mother make on the end of the "Italian iron," when I was a lad at home. Old Sam, the landlord, had just come home from his work, and sat quietly smoking on the long settle, in a nook by the fireside, while his wife, Mary, got some tea ready

for her tired old man. The entrance of a customer seemed to be an important affair to them, and partly so, I believe, because they were glad to have a little company in their quiet corner, and liked to hear, now and then, how the world was wagging a few miles off. I called for a glass of ale, and something like the following conversation ensued:—

Mary. Aw'll bring it, measter. See yo, tay this cheer. It's as chep sittin' as stonnin'. An' poo up to th' fire, for it's noan so warm to-neet.

Sam. Naw, it's nobbut cowdish, for sure; draw up to th' hob, an' warm yo, for yo look'n parish't.*

"If you can bring me a crust of bread and cheese, or a bit of cold meat, or anything, I shall be obliged to you," said I.

Mary. Ah, sure aw will. We'n a bit o' nice cowd beef; an' I'll bring it eawt. But it's bhoylt (boiled), mind yo! Dun yo like it bhoylt? Yo'n find it middlin' toothsome.

I told her that it would do very well; and then the landlord struck in:—

Sam. Doesto yer, lass. There's a bit o' pickle theer, i'th cubbort; aw dar say he'd like some. Fot it eawt, an' let him *feel* at it.

Mary. Oh, ay, sure there is; an' aw'll bring it, too. Aw declare aw'd forgetten it! Dun yo like pickle, measther?

"I do," said I, "just for a taste."

Mary. Well, well; aw meeon for a taste. But aw'll bring it an' yo can help yorsel to't. Let's see, wi'n yo have hard brade? Which side dun yo come fro?

"I come from Manchester," said I.

Mary. Fro Manchester, eh! Whau, then, yo'd'n rather ha' loaf-brade, aw'll uphowd yo.

"Nay, nay," said I, "I'm country-bred; and I would rather have a bit of oat-cake. I very seldom get any in Manchester; and, when I do, it tastes as if it was mismanaged, somehow; so a bit of good country bread will be a treat to me."

Mary. That's reet; aw'll find yo some gradely good stuff! An' it's a deeol howsomer nor loaf, too, mind yo. . . . . Neaw, wi'n nought uncuth to set afore yo; but yo'n find that beef's noan sich bad takkin', if yor ony ways sharp set. . . . Theer, see yo! Nea, may yoursel' awhom, an' spare nought, for wi'n plenty moor. But houd! yo hannot o' vor tools yet. Aw'll get vo a fork in a crack.

* *Parish't*—perished.

I fell to with a hearty good-will, for the viands before me were not scanty, and they were both wholesome, and particularly welcome, after my sharp walk in the keen wind, which came whistling over the moors that night. The first heat of the attack was beginning to slacken a bit, and Old Sam, who had been sitting in the corner, patient and pleased, all the while, with an observant look, began to think that now there might be room for him to put in a word or two. I, also, began to feel as if I had no objection to taper off my meal with a little country talk; and the old man was just asking me what the town's folk said about the parliamentary crisis, and the rumour which had reached him, that there was an intention of restoring the corn-laws again, when Mary interrupted him by saying, "Husht, Sam; doesta yer nought?" He took the pipe out of his mouth, and, quietly blowing the smoke from the corner of his lips, held his head on one side in a listening attitude. Old Sam smiled, and lighting his pipe again, he said, "Ah, yon's Jone o' Jeffry's." "It's nought else, aw believe," said Mary; "does ta think he'll co'?" "Co', ah," replied Sam; "does he eves miss, thinks ta? Tay thy cheer to th' tone side a bit, an' may reawm for him, for he'll be i'th heawse in a minute." And then, turning to me, he said, "Nea, then, measter, yo'n yer some gam, if yor spare't." He had scarcely done speaking, when a loud "Woigh!" was heard outside, as a cart stopped at the door, and a heavy footstep came stamping up the lobby. The kitchen door opened, and a full-blown Lancashire Cossack stood before us. Large-limbed and broad-shouldered, with a great, frank, good-tempered face, full of rude health and glee. He looked a fine sample of simple manhood, with a disposition that seemed to me, from the expression of his countenance, to be something between that of an angel and a bull-dog. Giving his hands a hearty smack, he rubbed them together, and smiled at the fire; and then, doffing his rough hat, and flinging it with his whip upon the table, he shouted out, "Hello! Heaw are yo—o' on yo! Yo'r meeterly quiet again to-neet, Mary! An' some ov a a cowd neet it is. My nose sweats." The landlord whispered to me, "Aw towd yo, didn't aw. Sit yo still; he's rare company, is Jone."

Mary. Ah, we're quiet enough; but we shannut be so long, neaw at thir't come'd, Jone.

Jone. Well, well. Yor noan beawn to flyte mo, owd crayter, are yo?

Sam. Tay no notiz on hur, wilto, foo; hoo meeons nougnt wrang.

Mary. Nut aw! Sit to deawn, Jone. We'er olez fain to sitho; for thir't noan one o'th warst mak o' folk, as roof as to art.

Jone. Aw'st sit mo deawn, as what aw am; an' aw'st warm me too, beside; an' aw'll ha' summat to sup too, afore aw darken yon dur-hole again. . . . Owd woman, fill mo one o'th big'st pots yo han, an' let's be havin' houd, aw pray yo; for my throttle's as dry as a kex. An' be as slippy as ever yo con, or aw'st be helpin' mysel, for it's ill bidein' for dry folk amung good drink!

Mary. Nay, nay; aw'll sarve tho, Jone, i' tho'll be patient hauve a minute; an' theaw'st ha' plenty to start wi', as heaw't be.

Jone. "That's just reet," said Pinder, when his wife bote hur tung i' two! Owd woman, yo desarv'n a comfortable sattlement i'th top shop when yo dee'n; an' yo'st ha' one, too, iv aw've ony say i'th matter. . . Eh, heaw quiet yo are, Sam! By th' mass, iv aw're here a bit moor, aw'd may some rickin' i' this cauve-cote, too. Whau, mon, yo'dd'n sink into a deeod sleep, an' fair dee i'th shell, iv one didn't wakken yo up a bit, neaw and then.

Mary. Eh, mon! Thea sees, our Sam an' me's gettin owd, an' wi'dd'n raythur be quiet, for th' bit o' time at wi' ha'n to do on. Beside, aw could never do wi' roof wark. Raylee o' me! It'd weary a grooin' tree to ha' th' din, an' th' lumber, an' th' muck at te han i' some ale heawses. To my thinkin', aw'd go as fur as othur grace* grew or wayter ran, afore aw'd live amoon sich doin's. One could elthur manage we't at th' for-end o' their days. But what, we hannot so lung to do on neaw; an' aw would e'en like to finish as quietly as aw can. We hannot had a battle i' this heawse as—let's see—as three year an' moor; ha'n wi, Sam?

Sam. Naw, aw dunnot think we han. But we soud'n a deeol moor ale, just afore that time, too.

Jone. Three year, sen yo! Eh, the dule, Mary; heaw ha'n yo shap'd that! Whau owd Neddy at th' Hoo'senam—yo known owd Neddy, aw reckon, dunnot yo, Sam?

Sam. Do I know Rachda' Church steps, thinksto?

Jone. Aw dar say yo known th' steps a deeol better nor yo known th' church, owd brid!

* Grass.

Sam. Whau, aw have been bin up thoose steps a time or two i' my life; an thea knows, ony body at's bin up 'em a twothore* times, 'll nut forget 'em so soon; for if thi'n tay 'em sharpish fro' th' botham to th' top, it'll try their wynt up rarely afore they getten to Tim Bobbin gravestone i'th owd church-yort. But, aw've bin to sarvice theer as oft as theaw has, aw think.

Jone. Ah!—an' yo'n getten abeawt as mich good wi't, as aw have, aw dar say; an' that's nought to crack on;—but wi'n say no moor upo' that footin'. Iv yo known ony body at o', yo known owd Neddy at th' Hoo'senam; and aw'll be bund for't, 'at i' three years time he's brunt mony a peawnd o' candles wi' watchin' folk feight i' their heawse. Eh, aw've si'n him ston o'er 'em, wi' a candle i' cyther hont, co'in eawt, "Nea lads. Turn him o'er Tum! Let 'em ha' reawm, chaps; let 'em ha' reawm! Nea lads! Keep a lose leg, Jam! Nea lads!" And then, when one on 'em wur done to th' lung-length, he'd sheawt eawt, "Houd! he's put his hont up! Come, give o'er, and ger up." And, afore they'd'n getten gradely wynded, and put their clooas on, he'd offer "another quart for the next battle." Eh, he's one o'th quarest chaps i' this nation, is owd Ned, to my thinkin'; an' he's some gradely good points in him, too.

Sam. There isn't a quarer o' this countryside, as hea't be; an' there's some crumpers amoon th' lot.

Jone. Aw guess yo known Bodle, too, dunnot yo, owd Sam?

Sam. Yigh, aw do. He wortches up at th' col-pit yon, doesn't he?

Jone. He does, owd craytur.

Mary. Let's see, isn't that him 'at skens a bit?

Sam. A bit, saysto, lass? It's aboon a bit, by Guy. He skens ill enough to crack a looking-glass, welly (well-nigh).

Mary. Eh, do let th' lad alone, folk, win yo. Aw marvel at yo'n no moor wit nor mayin foos o' folk at's wrang wheer they connut help it. Yo met happen be strucken yorsels! Beside, he's somebory's chylt, an' somebory likes him too, aw'll uphowd him; for there never wur a feaw face i' this world, but there wur a feaw fancy to match it, somewheer.

Jone. They may fancy him 'at likes, for me; but there's noan so mony folk at'll fancy Bodle, at after they'n smelled at him once't. An', by Guy, he's hardly wit enough to keep fro'

* *A Twothore*—a few.

runnin' again woles i'th dayleet. But, aw see yo known him weel enough; an' so aw'll tell yo a bit of a crack abeawt him an' Owd Neddy.

Mary. Well let's ha't; an' mind to tells no lies abeawt th' lad i' thy talk.

Jone. Bith mon, Mary, aw connut do, beawt aw say at he's other a pratty un or a good un.

Sam. Get forrud wi' thy tale, Jone, wilto: an' bother no moor abeawt it.

Jone (Whispers to Owd Sam): Aw say. Who's that chap at sits hutchin i' the nook theer, wi' his meawth oppen?

Sam. Aw know not. But he's a nice quiet lad o' somebory's, so tay no notice. Thae'll just meet plez him i' tho'll get forrud; thae may see that, i' tho'll look at him; for he stares like a ferret at's sin a ratton.

Jone. Well, yo see'n, Sam, one mornin', after Owd Neddy an' Bodle had been fuddlin' o' th' o'erneet, thi'dd'n just getten a yure o' th' owd dog into 'em, an' they sit afore th' fire i' Owd Neddy's kitchen, as quiet, to look at, as two pot dolls; but they didn't feel so, nother; for thi'dd'n some of a yed-waache apiece, i' th' treawth wur known. When thi'dd'n turn't things o'er a bit, Bodle begun o' lookin' very yearn'stfully at th' fire-hole o' at once't, and he said, "By th' mass, Ned, aw've a good mind to go reet up th' chimbley." Well, yo known, Neddy likes a spree as well as ony mon livin', an' he doesn't care so mich what mak' o' one it is, nother; so as soon as he yerd that he jumped up, an' said, "Damn it, Bodle, go up—up wi' tho!" Bodle stood still a minute, looking at th' chimbley, an' as he double't his laps up, he said, "Well, neaw; should aw rayley goo up, thinksta, owd crayter?" "Go?—ah; what elze?" said Owd Ned—"Up wi' tho; soot's good for th' bally-waach, mon; an' aw'll gi' tho a quart ov ale when tho comes deawn again!" "Will ta, for sure?" said Bodle, prickin' his ears. "Am aw lyin' thinks ta?" onswer'd Owd Neddy. "Whau, then, aw'm off, by th' mon, iv it's as lung as a steeple;" an' he made no moor bawks at th' job, but set th' tone foot onto th' top-bar, an' up he went into th' smudge-hole. Just as he wur crommin' hissel' in at th' botham o'th chimbley, th' owd woman coom in to see what they hadd'n agate; an' as soon as Bodle yerd hur, he code eawt, "Howd her back a bit, whol aw get eawt o'th seet, or else hoo'll poo me deawn again." Hoo stare't a bit afore hoo

could may it eawt what it wur at're creepin up th' chimney-hole, an' hoo said, "What mak o' lumber ha'n yo afoot neaw? for yo're a rook o'th big'st nowmuns at ever trode ov a floor! Yo'n some make o' divulment agate i'th chimbley, aw declare." As soon as hoo fund what it wur, hoo sheawted, "Eh, thea greight gawmless foo! Wheer arto for up theer! Thea'll be smoor't, mon!" An, hoo would ha' darted forrud, an' getten howd on him; but Owd Ned kept stonnin afore hur, an' sayin, "Let him alone, mon; it's nobbut a bit of a spree." Then he looked o'er his shoulder at Bodle, an' said, "Get tee forrud, wilto, nowmun; thae met a bin deawn again by neaw;" an, as soon as he see'd at Bodle wur gettin meeterly weel up th' hole, he leet her go; but hoo wur to lat to get howd. An' o' at hoo could do, wur to fot him a seawse or two o' th' legs wi' th' poker. But he wur for up, an' nought else. He did just stop abeawt hauve a minute—when he feld hur hit his legs—to co' eawt, "Hoo's that at's hittin' mo?" "Whau," said hoo, "It's me, thae greight leather-yed;—an' come deawn wi' tho! Whatever arto' doin' i'th chimbley?" "Aw'm goin' up for ale." "Ale! There's no ale up theer, thae greight brawsen foo! Eh, aw wish yor Mally wur here!" "Aw wish hoo wur here, istid o' me," said Bodle. "Come deawn witho this minute, thae greight drunken hal!" "Not yet," said Bodle—"but aw'll not be lung, nothur, yo may depend;—for it's noan a nice place—this isn't. Eh! there is some ov a smudge! An' it gwos wur as aw go fur;—a—tscho—o! By Guy, aw con see noan—nor talk, nothur;—so ger off, an' let mo get it o'er afore aw'm chauk't;" and then th' owd lad crope forrud, as hard as he could, for he're thinkin' abeawt th' quart ov ale. Well, Owd Neddy nearly skrike't wi' laughin', as he watched Bodle draw his legs up eawt o' th' seet; an' he set agate o' hommerin' th' chimbley whole wi' his hont, an sheawtin' up, "Go on, Bodle, owd lad! Go on, owd mon! Thir't a reet un! Thea'st have a quart o' th' best ale i' this hole, i' tho lives till tho comes deawn again, as hea 'tis, owd brid! An i' tho dees through it, aw'll be fourpence or fi'pence toawrd thi berrin." And then he went sheawting up an' deawn, "Hey! Dun yo yer, lads; come here! Owd Bodle's gone up th' chimbley! Aw never sprad my e'en upo th' marrow trick to this i' my life." Well, yo may think, Sam, th' whole heawse wur up i' no time; an' some rare spwort they ha'dd'n; an' Owd

Neddy kept goin' to th' eawtside, to see if Bodle had getten his yed eawt at th' top; an' then runnin' in again, an' bawlin' up th' flue, "Bodle, owd lad, heaw arto gettin' on? Go throo wi't, owd cock!" But, whol he're starin' and sheawtin' up th' chimbley, Bodle lost his houd, somewheer toawrd th' top, an' he coom shutterin' deawn again, an' o' th' soot i' th' chimbley wi' him; an' he let wi' his hinder-end thump o'th top-bar, an' then roll't deawn upo th' har'stone. An' a greadly blash-boggart he looked; yo may think. Th' owd lad seem't as if he hardly knowed wheer he wur; so he lee theer a bit, amoon a cloud o' soot, an' Owd Neddy stoode o'er him, laughin', an' wipein' his e'en, an' co'in eawt, "Tay thy wynt a bit, Bodle; thir't safe londed, iv it be hard leetin'! Thir't a reet un; bi' th' mon arto, too. Tay thy wynt, owd bird! Thea'st have a quart, as hea 'tis, owd mon; as soon as ever aw con see my gate to th' bar eawt o' this smudge at thea's brought wi' tho! Aw never had my chimbley swept as chep i' my life!"

Mary, Well, if ever! Whau, it're enough to may th' fellow's throttle up! A greight, drunken leather-yed! But, he'd be some dry, mind yo!

Jone. Yo'r reet, Mary! Aw think mysel' at a quart ov ale 'ud come noan amiss after a do o' that mak. An' Bodle wouldn't wynd aboon once wi' it, afore he see'd th' bottom o' th' pot, noather.

Well, I had a good laugh at Jone's tale, and I enjoyed his manner of telling it, quite a much as anything there was in the story itself; for, he seemed to talk with every limb of his body, and every feature of his face; and told it, altogether, in such a living way, with so much humour and earnestness, that it was irresistible; and as I was "giving mouth" a little, with my face turned up toward the ceiling, he turned to me, and said quickly, "Come, aw say; are yo noan fleyed o' throwing yo'r choles off th' hinges?" We soon settled down into a quieter mood, and drew round the fire, for the night was cold; when Jone suddenly pointed out to the landlord, one of those little deposits of smoke which sometimes wave about on the bars of the fire-grate, and, after whispering to him, "See yo, Sam; a stranger upo th' bar, theer;" he turned to me, and said, "That's yo, measther!" This is a little superstition, which is common to the fire-sides of the poor in all England, I believe.

Soon after this, Mary said to Jone, "Hasto gan thy horse aught, Jone?" "Sure, aw have," replied he, "Aw laft it heytin', an plenty to go on wi', so then. Mon, aw reckon to look after deawn-crayters a bit, iv there be aught stirrin'." "Well," said she, "aw dar say thea does, Jone; an' mind yo, thoose at winnut do some bit like to things at connut talk for theirsels, they'n never ha' no luck, as hoo they are." "Well," said Jone, "my horse wortches weel, an' he sleeps weel, an' he heyts weel, an' he drinks weel, an' he parts wi't fearful weel; so he doesn't ail mich yet." "Well," replied Mary, "there isn't a wick thing i' this world can wortch as it should do, if it doesn't heyt as it should do." Here I happened to take a note-book out of my pocket, and write in it with my pencil, when the conversation opened again.

Sam. (Whispering.) Sitho, Jone, he's bookin' tho!

Jone. Houd, measther, houd! What mak' o' marlocks are yo after, neaw! What're yo for wi' us, theer! But aw caren't a flirt abeawt it; for thi' connot hang folk for talkin' neaw, as thi' could'n once on a day; so get forrud wi't, as what it is.

He then, also, began to inquire about the subject which was the prevailing topic of conversation at that time, namely, the parliamentary crisis, in which Lord John Russell had resigned his office at the head of the government; and the great likelihood there seemed to be of a protectionist party obtaining power.

Jone. Han yo yerd aught abeawt Lord Stanley puttin' th' Corn Laws on again? There wur some rickin' abeawt it i' Bury teawn, when aw coom off wi' th' cart to-neet.

Sam. They'n never do't, mon! They connot do! An' it's very weel, for aw dunnut know what mut become o' poor folk iv they did'n do. What think'n yo, measther?

I explained to them the unsettled state of parliamentary affairs, as it had reached us through the paper; and gave them my firm belief that the Corn Laws had been abolished once for all in this country; and that there was no political party in England who wished to restore them, who would ever have the power to do so.

Jone. Dun yo think so? Aw'm proud to yer it!

Sam. An' so am aw too, Jone. But what, aw know'd it weel enough. Eh, mon; there's a deal moor crusts o' brade lyin' abeawt i' odd nooks an' corners, nor there wur once't ov a day. Aw've sin th' time when thi'd'n ha' bin cleeked up like lumps o' gowd.

Jone. Aw think they'n ha' to fot Lord John back, to wheyve (weave) his cut deawn yet. To my thinkin' he'd no business to lev his looms. But aw dar say he knows his own job betther nor me. He'll be as fause as a boggart, or elze he'd never ha' bin i' that shop as lung as he has bin, not he. There's moor in his yed nor a smo'-tooth comb con fot eawt. What thinken yo, owd brid?

Sam. It's so like; it's so like! But aw dunnot care who's in, Jone, i' thi'n nobbut do some good for poor folk; an' that's one o' th' main jobs for thoose at's power to do't. But, iv they wur'n to put th' Corn Bill on again, there's mony a theawsan' would be clemmed to deeoth, o' ov a rook.

Jone. Ah, there would so, Sam, 'at I know on. But see yo; there's a deal on 'em 'ud go deawn afore me. Aw'd may somebody houd back whol their cale coom! Iv they winnot gi' me my share for wortchin' for, aw'll have it eawt o' some nook, ov aw dunnot, damn Jone! (striking the table heavily with his fist.) They's never be clemmed at ir heawse, as aw ha' si'n folk clemmed i' my time—never, whol aw've a fist a th' end o' my arm! Neaw, what have aw towd yo!

Sam. Thea'rt reet lad! Aw houd te wit good, by th' mass! Whol they gi'n us some bit like ov a choance, we can elther do. At th' most o' times, we'n to kill 'ursels (ourselves) to keep 'ursels, welly; but, when it comes to scarce wark an' dear mheyt, th' upstroke's noan so fur off.

Mary. Ay, ay. If it're nobbut a body's sel', we met manage to pinch a bit, neaw an' then; becose one could reayson abeawt it some bit like. But it's th' childer, mon, it's th' childer! Th' little things at look'n for it reggelar; an' wonder'n heaw it is when it doesn't come. Eh, dear o' me! To see poor folk's little bits o' childher yammerin' for a bite o' mheyt—when there's noan for 'em; an' lookin' up i' folk's faces, as mich as to say, "Connut yo help mo?" It's enough to may (make) onybody cry their shoon full!

Here I took out my book to make another note.

Jone. Hello! yo'r agate again! What, are yo takkin th' pickter on mo, or summat? . . . Eh, Sam; what a thing this larnin' is. Aw should ha' bin worth mony a theawsan peawnd if aw could ha' done o' that shap, see yo!

Sam. Aw guess thea con write noan, nor read noather, con ta, Jone?

Jone. Not aw! Aw've no moor use for a book nor a duck has for a umbrell. Aw've had to wortch hard sin aw're five year owd, mon. Iv aw've aught o' that mak to do, aw go to owd Silver-yed at th' lone-side wi't. It may's mo mad, mony a time, mon; one looks sich a foo!

Sam. An' he con write noan mich, aw think, con he?

Jone. Naw. He went no fur nor pot-hook an' ladles i' writin', aw believe. But he can read a bit, an' that's moor nor a deeol o' folk abeawt here can do. Aw know nobory upo this side at's greadly larnt up, nobbut Ash'oth parson. But there's plenty o' chaps i' Rachdaw teawn at's so brawsen wi' wit, whol noather me, nor thee, nor no mon elze, con may ony sense on 'em. Yo reckelect'n a 'torney co'in' here once't. What dun yo think o' him?

Sam. He favvurs a foo, Jone; or aw'm a foo mysel'.

Jone. He's far larnt i' aught but honesty, mon, that's heaw it is. He'll do no reet, nor tay no wrang. So wi'n lap it up just wheer it is; for little pigs ha'n lung ears.

Sam. Aw'll tell tho what, Jone; he's a bad trade by th' hond, for one thing; an' a bad trade 'll mar a good mon sometimes.

Jone. It brings moor in nor mine does. But wi'n let it drop. Iv aw'd his larnin, aw'd may summat on't.

Sam. Ah, well; it's a fine thing is larnin', Jone! It's a very fine thing! It tay's no reawm up, mon. An' then, th' ballies connut fot it, thea sees. But what, poor folk are so taen up wi' gettin' what they need'n for th' bally an' th' back, whol thi'n noathur time nor inclination for nought but a bit ov a crack for a leetenin'.

Jone. To mich so, owd Sam! To mich so! . .

Mary. Thae never tells one heaw th' wife is, Jone.

Jone. Whau, th' owd lass is yon; an' hoo's noather sickly, nor soory, nor sore, 'at aw know on. . . . Yigh, hoo's trouble't wi' a bit ov a breykin'-eawt abeawt th' meawth, sometimes.

Mary. Does hoo get nought for it?

Jone. Nawe, nought 'at'll mend it. But, aw'm mad enough, sometimes, to plaister it wi' my hond,—iv aw could find i' my heart.

Mary. Oh, aw see what to meeons, neaw. . . An' aw dar say thea gi's her 'casion for't, neaw an' then.

Jone. Well, aw happen do; for th' best o' folk need'n bidin' wi' a bit sometimes; an' aw'm noan one o' th' best, yo known.

Mary. Nawe; nor th' warst noathur, Jone.

Jone. Yo dunnut know o', mon.

Mary. Happen not, but, thi'rt tc good to brun, as hea't be.

Jone. Well, onybody's so, Mary. But, we're o' God Almighty's childer, mon; an' aw feel fain on't, sometimes; for he's th' best feyther at a chylt con have.

Mary. Ah, but thea'rt nobbut like other childer, Jone; thea doesn't tak as mich notice o' thy feyther, as thea should do.

Sam. Well, well; let's o' on us be as good as we con be, iv we aren't as good as we should be; an' then wi's be better nor we are.

Jone. Hello! that clock begins 'o givin' short 'lowance, as soon as ever aw get agate o' talkin'; aw'm mun be off again!

Sam. Well; thae'll co' a lookin' at us, when tho comes this gate on, winnut to, Jone? Iv tho doesn't, aw'st be a bit mad, thae knows.

Jone. As lung as aw'm wick and weel, owd crayter, aw'st keep comin' again, yo may depend,—like Clegg Ho' Boggart.

Sam. Well neaw, mind tho does do; for aw'd sooner see thee nor two fiddlers, ony time; so good neet to tho, an' good luck to tho, too, Jone; wi' o' my heart!

The night was wearing late, and, as I had yet nearly three miles to go, I rose, and went my way. This road was never so much travelled as some of the highways of the neighbourhood, but, since railways were made, it has been quieter than before, and the grass has begun to creep over it a little in some places. It leads through a district which has always been a kind of weird region to me. And I have wandered among those lonely moorland hills above Birtle, and Ashworth, and Bagslate; up to the crest of old Knowl, and over the wild top of Rooley, from whence the greatest part of South Lancashire—that wonderful region of wealth and energy—lies under the eye, from Blackstone Edge to the Irish Sea; and I have wandered through the green valleys and silent glens, among those hills, communing with the "shapes, and sounds, and shifting elements" of nature, in many a quiet trance of meditative joy; when the serenity of the scene was unmixed with any ruder sounds than the murmurs and gurglings of the mountain stream, careering over its rocky bed through the hollow of the vale; and the music of small birds among the woods which lined the banks; or the gambols of the summer wind among the rustling green,

which canopied the lonely stream, so thickly that the flood of sunshine which washed the tree-tops in gold, only stole into the deeps in fitful threads; hardly giving a warmer tinge to the softened light in cool grots down by the water side. Romantic Spoddenlond! Country of wild beauty; of hardy, simple life; of old-world manners, and of ancient tales and legends dim! There was a time when the very air of the district seemed, to my young mind, impregnated with boggart-lore, and all the wild "gramerie" of old Saxon superstition,—when I looked upon it as the last stronghold of the fairies; where they would remain impregnable, haunting wild "thrutches" and sylvan "chapels," in lonely deeps of its cloughs and woods; still holding their mystic festivals there on moonlight nights, and tripping to the music of its waters, till the crack of doom. And, for all the boasted march of intellect, it is, even to this day, a district where the existence of witches, and the power of witch-doctors, wisemen, seers, planet-rulers, and prognosticators, find great credence in the imaginations of a rude and unlettered people. There is a little fold, called "Prickshaw," in this township of Spotland, which fold was the home of a notable country astrologer, in Tim Bobbin's time, called "Prickshaw Witch." Tim tells a humourous story about an adventure he had with this Prickshaw planet-ruler, at the Angel Inn, in Rochdale. Prickshaw keeps up its old oracular fame in that moorland quarter to this day, for it has its planet-ruler still; and, it is not alone in such wild, outlying nooks of the hills that these professors of the art of divination may yet be found; almost every populous town in Lancashire has, in some corner of it, one or more of these gifted star-readers, searching out the hidden things of life, to all inquirers, at about a shilling a-head. These country soothsayers mostly drive a sort of contraband trade in their line, in as noiseless and secret a way as possible, among the most ignorant and credulous part of the population. And it is natural that they should flourish wherever there are minds combining abundance of ignorant faith and imagination with a plentiful lack of knowledge. But they are not all skulkers these diviners of the skies, for now and then a bold prophet stands forth, in distinct proportions, before the public gaze, who has more lofty and learned pretentions; witness the advertisement of Dr. Alphonso Gazelle, of No. 4, Sparth Bottoms, Rochdale, which appears in the *Rochdale Sentinel*,

of the 3rd of December, 1853.* Oh, departed Lilly and Agrippa; your shadows are upon us still! But I must continue my story of the lone old road, and its associations; and as I wandered on that cold and silent night, under the blue sky, where night's candles were burning, so clear and calm, I remembered that this was the country of old Adam de Spotland, who, many centuries since, piously bequeathed certain broad acres of land, "for the cure of souls," in the parish of Rochdale. He has, now, many centuries slept with his fathers. And as I walked down the road, in this sombre twilight, with a hushed wind, and under the shade of the woody height on which the homestead of the brave old Saxon stood, my footsteps sounding clear in the quiet air, and the very trees seeming to bend over to one another, and commune in awful murmurs on the approach of an intruder, how could I tell what the tramp of my unceremonious feet might waken there? The road crosses a deep and craggy glen, called "Simpson Clough," which is one of the finest pieces of ravine scenery in the county, little as it is known. The entire length of this wild gorge is nearly three miles, and it is watered by a stream from the hills, called "Nadin Water," which, in seasons of heavy rain, rages and roars with great violence, through its rocky channels. There is many a strange old tale connected with this clough. Half way up a shaley bank, which overhangs the river on the western side of the clough, the mouth of an ancient lead mine may still be seen, partly shrouded by brushwood. Upon the summit of a precipitous steep of wildwood and rock, which bounds the eastern side of the clough, stands Bamford Hall, a handsome, modern building of stone, a few yards from the site of the old hall of the Bamfords of Bamford. The new building is a residence of one branch of the Fenton family,

* "Beneficial practical philosophy, No. 4, Sparth Bottoms, near Rochdale.—Prognostic astro-phrenology, or nature considered as a whole—its matter, its properties, its laws, physical, moral, and intellectual; and the effect of their influence on individual life, character, and ability. From these premises, and nearly twenty years' experience, any lady or gentleman may have the most valuable advice on matters of health, sickness, profession, trade, emigration, and speculation; also marriage—its prospects to the inquirer, whether it will be attended with happiness, the time of its occurrence, a full description and character of the present or future partner, with copious instruction to the unmarried—which offer or party to take, and thus secure the fullest amount of happiness, shown to any individual by this combination of science. The principal requisite points of information for applying the science to the benefit of an inquirer are—the precise date, place of birth, and the station in life. Attendance every day except Mondays, at No 4, Sparth Bottoms, Rochdale.

"Dr. Alphonso Gazelle"

wealthy bankers and cotton spinners, and owners of large tracts of land, here and elsewhere. On an elevated table-land, at the western side of the clough, and nearly opposite to Bamford Hall, stood the ancient mansion of Grizlehurst, the seat of the notable family of Holt, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The Holt family were once the most powerful and wealthy landowners in the parish of Rochdale. The principal seats of the family in this parish were Stubley Hall, in the township of Wardleworth, and Castleton Hall, in the township of Castleton. The manor of Spotland was granted by Henry VIII., to Thomas Holt, who was knighted in Scotland, by Edward, Earl of Hertford, in the thirty-sixth year of the reign of that monarch. Part of a neighbouring clough still bears the name of "Tyrone's Bed," from the tradition that Hugh O'Neal, Earl of Tyrone and King of Ulster, took shelter in these woody solitudes, after his defeat in the great Irish Rebellion, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Mr. John Roby, of Rochdale, has woven this legend into an elegant romance, in his "Traditions of Lancashire."

I reached home about ten o'clock, and, thinking over the incidents of my walk, I was a little impressed by one fact, suggested by the conversation at the roadside public-house, with "Jone o' Jeffrey's," and the old couple; namely, that there is a great outlying mass of dumb folk in this country, who—by low social condition, but more by lack of common education among them—are shut out from the chance of hearing much, and still more from the chance of understanding what little they do hear, respecting the political questions of the time; and, also, with respect to many other matters which are of essential importance to their welfare. Whether this ignorance which yet pervades a great proportion of the poor of England, is chargeable upon that multitude itself, or upon that part of the people whom more favourable circumstances have endowed with light and power, and who yet withhold these elements from their less fortunate fellows, or, whether it is chargeable upon neither, let casuists decide. The fact that this ignorance does exist among the poor of England, lies so plainly upon the surface of society, that it can only be denied by those who are incurious as to the condition of the humbler classes of this kingdom; or, by those who move in such exclusive circles of life, that they habitually ignore the conditions of human existence which lie outside of their own

limits of society and sympathy; or, by such as wink their eyes to the truth of this matter, in order to work out some small purpose of their own. Wherever there is ignorance at all there is too much of it; and it cannot be too soon removed, especially by those who are wise enough to see the crippling malignities of its nature. That portion of our population which hears next to nothing, and understands less, of politics and the laws—any laws whatever—is nevertheless compelled to obey the laws, right or wrong, and whatever strange mutations they may be subject to; and is thus continually drifted to and fro by conflicting currents of legislation which it cannot see; currents of legislation which sometimes rise from sources where there exists, unfortunately, more love for ruling than for enlightening. Many changes come over the social condition of this blind multitude, they know not whence, nor how, nor why. The old song says—

> Remember, when the judgment's weak,
> The prejudice is strong.

And, certainly, that part of the popular voice which is raised upon questions respecting which it has little or no sound information, must be considerably swayed by prejudice, and by that erratic play of unenlightened feeling, which has no safer government than the ephemeral circumstances which chase each other off the field of time. Shrewd demagogues know well how prostrate is the position of this uneducated "mass," as it is called; and they have a stock of old-fashioned tricks, by which they can move it to their own ends "as easy as lying." He who knows the touches of this passive instrument, can make it discourse the music he desires; and, unhappily, that is not always airs from heaven.

> 'Tis the time's plague,
> When madmen lead the blind.

Now, the educated classes have all the wide field of ancient learning open to them—they can pasture where they will; and, the stream of present knowledge rushing by, they can drink as they list. Whatever is doing in politics, too, they hear of, whilst these things are yet matters of public dispute; and, in some degree, they understand and see the drift of them, and, therefore, can throw such influence as in them lies into one or the other

scale of the matter. This boasted out-door parliament—this free expression of public opinion in England, however, as I have said before, goes no farther down among the people than education goes. Below that point lies a land of fretful slaves, dungeoned off by ignorance from the avenues which lead to freedom; and they drag out their lives in unwilling subservience to a legislation which is beyond their influence. Their ignorance keeps them dumb; and, therefore, their condition and wants are neither so well known, nor so often nor so well expressed as those of the educated classes. They seldom complain, however, until the state of affairs drives them to great extremity, and then their principal exponents are mobs, and uproars of desperation. It is plain that where there is society there must be law, and obedience to that law must be enforced, even among those who know nothing of the law, as well as those who defy it; but my principal quarrel is with that ignorant condition of theirs which shuts them out from any reasonable hope of exercising their rights as men and citizens. And so long as that ignorance is *unnecessarily* continued, the very enforcement of laws among them, the nature of which they have no chance of knowing, looks, to me, like injustice. I see a remarkable difference, however, between the majority of popular movements which have agitated the people for some time past, and that successful one—the repeal of the corn-laws. The agitation of that question, I believe, awakened and enlisted a greater breadth of the *understanding sympathy* of the nation, among all classes, than was ever brought together upon any one popular question which has been agitated within the memory of man. But it did more than this—and herein lies one of the foundation-stones which shall hold it firm awhile, I think; since it has passed into law, its effects have most efficiently convinced that uneducated multitude of the labouring poor, who could not very well understand, and did not care much for the mere disputation of the question. Everybody has a stomach of some sort—and it frequently happens that when the brain is not very active the stomach is particularly so—so that, where it could not penetrate the understanding, it has by this time triumphantly reached the stomach, and now sits there, smiling defiance to any kind of sophistry that would coax it thenceforth again. The loaves of free trade followed the tracts of the League, and the hopes of protectionist philosophers are likely to be "adjourned

sine die," for this generation at least—perhaps for ever; for the fog is clearing up a little, and I think I see, in the distance, a better education getting ready for the next generation.

O for the coming of that glorious time
When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth
And best protection, this imperial realm,
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
An obligation on her part, to *teach*
Them who are born to serve her and obey
Binding herself by statute to secure
For all her children whom her soil maintains,
The rudiments of letters.

The Cottage of Tim Bobbin, and the Village of Milnrow.

If thou on men, their works and ways,
Canst throw uncommon light, man;
Here lies wha weel had won thy praise,
For Matthew was a bright man.

If thou art staunch without a stain,
Like the unchanging blue, man;
This was a kinsman o' thy ain,
For Matthew was a true man.

If thou hast wit, and fun, and fire,
And ne'er good wine did fear, man;
This was thy billie, dam, and sire,
For Matthew was a queer man.

BURNS.

IT is not in its large towns that the true type of the natives of Lancashire can be seen. The character of its town population is greatly modified by mixture with settlers from distant quarters. Not so in the country parts, because the tenancy of land, and employment upon it, are sufficiently competed by the natives; and while temptations to change of settlement are fewer, the difficulties in the way of changing settlement are greater there than in towns. Country people, too, stick to their old sod, with hereditary love, as long as they can keep soul and body together upon it, in any honest way. As numbers begin to press upon the means of living, the surplus fights its way in cities, or in foreign lands; or lingers out a miserable life in neglected corners, for want of work, and want of means to fly, in time, to a market where it might, at least, exchange its labour for its living. The growth of manufacture and railways, and the inroads of hordes of destitute, down-trodden Irish, are stirring up Lancashire, and

changing its features, in a surprising way; and this change is rapidly augmenting by a varied infusion of new human elements, attracted from all quarters of the kingdom by the immense increase of capital, boldly and promptly embarked in new inventions, and ever-developing appliances of science, by a people remarkable for enterprise and industry. Still, he who wishes to see the genuine descendants of those old Saxons who came over here some fourteen hundred years ago, to help the Britons of that day to fight for their land, and remained to farm it, and govern in it, let them ramble through the villages on the western side of Blackstone Edge. He will there find the open manners, the independent bearing, the steady perseverance, and that manly sense of right and wrong, which characterised their Teutonic forefathers. There, too, he will find the fair comeliness, and massive physical constitution of those broad-shouldered farmer-warriors, who made a smiling England out of an island of forests and bogs—who felled the woods, and drained the marshes, and pastured their quiet kine in the ancient lair of the wild bull, the boar, and the wolf.

Milnrow is an old village, a mile and a half eastward from the Rochdale station. The external marks of its antiquity are now few, and much obscured by the increase of manufacture there; but it is, for many reasons, well worth a visit. It is part of the fine township of Butterworth, enriched with many a scene of mountain beauty. A hardy moor-end race, half farmers, half woollen-weavers, inhabit the district; and their rude, but substantial cottages and farmsteads, often perch picturesquely about the summits and sides of the hills, or nestle pleasantly in green holms and dells, which are mostly watered by rivulets, from the moorland heights which bound the township on the east. There is also a beautiful lake, three miles in circumference, filling a green valley, up in the hills, about a mile and a half from the village. Flocks of sea-fowl often rest on this water, in their flight from the eastern to the western seas. From its margin the view of the wild ridges of the "Backbone of England" is fine to the north, while that part of it called "Blackstone Edge" slopes up majestically from the cart-road that winds along the eastern bank. A massive cathedral-looking crag frowns on the forehead of the mountain. This rock is a great point of attraction to ramblers from the vales below, and is called by them "Robin Hood Bed." A square

cavity in the lower part is called "Th' Cellar." Hundreds of names are sculptured on the surface of the rock, some in most extraordinary situations; and often have the keepers of the mooi been startled at peep of summer dawn by the strokes of an adventurous chiseller, hammering his initials into its hard face as stealthily as possible. But the sounds float, clear as a bell, miles over the moor, in the quiet of the morning, and disturb the game. One of the favourite rambles of my youth was from Rochdale town, through that part of Butterworth which leads by "Clegg Hall," commemorated in Roby's tradition of "Clegg Ho' Boggart," and thence across the green hills, by the old farmhouse, called "Peanock," and, skirting along the edge of this quiet lake—upon whose waters I have spent many a happy summer day, alone—up the lofty moorside beyond, to this rock, called "Robin Hood Bed," upon the bleak summit of Blackstone Edge. It is so large that it can be seen at a distance of four miles by the naked eye, on a clear day. The name of Robin Hood, that brave outlaw of the olden time—"The English ballad-singer's joy"—is not only wedded to this wild crag, but to at least one other congenial spot in this parish; where the rude traditions of the people point out another rock, of several tons weight, as having been thrown thither, by this king of the green-woods, from an opposite hill, nearly seven miles off. The romantic track where the lake lies, is above the level of Milnrow, and quite out of the ordinary way of the traveller; who is too apt to form his opinion of the features of the whole district, from the sterile sample he sees on the sides of the rail, between Manchester and Rochdale. But if he wishes to know the country and its inhabitants, he must get off that, "an' tak th' crow-gate," and he will find vast moors, wild ravines, green cloughs, and dells, and

> Shallow rivers, to whose falls,
> Melodious birds sing madrigals,

which will repay him for his pains. And then, if he be a Lancashire man, and a lover of genius, let him go to Milnrow—it was the dwelling-place of Tim Bobbin, with whose works I hope he is not unacquainted. His written works are not much in extent. He was a painter, and his rough brush was replete with Hogarthian sketches, full of nature, and radiant with his own broad, humourous originality. He also left a richly-humourous

dialectic tale, a few Hudibrastic poems and letters, characteristic of the sterling quality of his heart and head, and just serving to show us how much greater the man was than his book..

I was always proud of Tim, and in my early days have made many a pilgrimage to the village where he used to live, wandering home again through the green hills of Butterworth. Bent on seeing the place once more, I went up to Hunt's Bank, one fine day at the end of last hay-time, to catch the train to Rochdale. I paid my shilling, and took my seat among a lot of hearty workmen and country-folk coming back from Wales and the bathing places on the Lancashire coast. The season had been uncommonly fine, and the trippers looked brighter for their out, and, to use their own phrase, felt "fain at they'rn wick," and ready to buckle to work again, with fresh vigour. The smile of summer had got into the saddest of us a little; and we were communicative and comfortable. A long-limbed collier lad, after settling his body in a corner, began to hum, in a jolting metre, with as much freedom of mind as if he was at the mouth of a lonely "breast-hee" on his native moorside, a long country ditty about the courtship of Phœbe and Colin:—

> Well met, dearest Phœbe, oh, why in such haste?
> The fields and the meadows all day I have chased,
> In search of the fair one who does me disdain,
> You ought to reward me for all my past pain.

The late-comers, having rushed through the ticket-office into the carriages, were wiping their foreheads, and wedging themselves into their seats, in spite of many protestations about being "to full o'ready." The doors were slammed, the bell rung, the tickets were shown, the whistle screamed its shrill signal, and off we went, like a street on wheels, over the little Irk, that makes such a slushy riot under the wood bridge by the college wall. Within the memory of living men, the angler used to come down the bank, and settle himself among the grass, to fish in its clear waters. But since Arkwright set this part of the world so wonderfully astir with his practicable combination of other men's inventions, the Irk, like the rest of South Lancashire streams, has been put to work, and its complexion is now so "subdued to what it works in," that the angler comes no more to the banks of the Irk to beguile the delicate loach, and the lordly trout in his glittering suit of silver mail.

The train is now nearly a mile past Miles Platting, and about a mile over the fields, on the north side, lies the romantic dell

called "Boggart Hole Clough," hard by the village of Blackley—a pleasant spot for an afternoon walk from Manchester. An old Lancashire poet lives near it, too, in his country cottage. It is a thousand to one that, like me, the traveller will see neither the one nor the other from the train; but, like me, let him be thankful for both, and ride on. Very soon, now, appears, on the south side of the line, the skirts of Oldham town, scattered about the side and summit of a barren slope, with the tower of the parish church, peeping up between the chimneys of the cotton factories behind Oldham Edge. If the traveller can see no fine prospective meaning in the manufacturing system, he will not be delighted with the scene; for the country has a monotonous look, and is bleak and sterile, with hardly anything worthy of the name of a tree to be seen upon it. But now, about a hundred yards past the Oldham Station, there is a little of the picturesque for him to feast on. We are crossing a green valley, running north and south. Following the rivulet through the hollow, a thick wood waves on a rising ground to the south. In that wood stands Chadderton Hall, anciently the seat of the Chaddertons, some of whom were famous men; and since then, the seat of the Horton family. The situation is very pleasant, and the land about it looks richer than the rest of the neighbourhood. There was a deer-park here in the time of the Hortons. Chadderton is a place of some note in the history of the county; and it is said to have formerly belonged to one of the old orders of knighthood. On the other side of the line, about a mile and a half off, the south-east end of Middleton is in sight; with its old church on the top of a green hill. The greater part of the parish of Middleton, with other possessions in South Lancashire, belonging to the Ashetons from before Richard III., when extraordinary powers were granted to Randulph Asheton. The famous Sir Ralph Asheton, called "The Black Lad," from his wearing black armour, is traditionally said to have ruled in his territories in South Lancashire with great severity. In the town of Ashton, one of the lordships of this family, his name is still remembered with a kind of hereditary dislike; and till within the last five or six years he has been shot and torn to pieces, in effigy, by the inhabitants, at the annual custom of "The Riding of the Black Lad." The hero of the fine ballad called "The Wild Rider," written by Bamford, the Lancashire poet, was one of this family The Middleton estates,

in 1776, failing male issue, passed by marriage into the noble families of De Wilton and Suffield. Now, many a rich cotton spinner, perhaps lineally descended from some of the villain-serfs of the "Black Lad," has an eye to buying the broad lands of the proud old Ashetons.

The train is now hard by Blue Pits Station, where it is not impossible for the traveller to have to wait awhile. But he may comfort himself with the assurance that it is not often much more than half an hour or so. Let him amuse himself, meanwhile, with the wild dins that fill his ears;—the shouting and running of porters, the screams of engine-whistles, the jolts and collisions on a small scale, and the perpetual fuff-fuff of trains, of one kind or other, that shoot to and fro by his window, then stop suddenly, look thoughtful, as if they had dropt something, and run back again. If he looks out, ten to one he will see a red-hot monster making towards him from the distance at a great speed, belching steam, and scattering sparks and red-hot cinders; and, in the timidity of the moment, he may chance to hope it is on the right pair of rails. But time and a brave patience delivers him from these terrors, unshattered in everything—if his temper holds good—and he shoots ahead again.

The moorland hills now sail upon the sight, stretching from the round peak of Knowl, on the north-west, to the romantic heights of Saddleworth on the south-east. The train is three minutes from Rochdale, but, before it reaches there, let the traveller note that picturesque old mansion, on the green, above Castleton Clough, at the left-hand side of the rail. His eye must be active, for, at the rate he is going, the various objects about him literally "come like shadows, so depart." This is Castleton Hall, formerly a seat of the Holts, of Stubley, an ancient and powerful family in this parish, in the reign of Henry VIII. Castleton Hall came afterwards into the possession of Humphrey Chetham, the founder of Chetham College, in Manchester. Since then it has passed into other hands; but the proverb, "as rich as a Chetham o' Castleton," is often used by the people of this district, at this day; and many interesting anecdotes, characteristic of the noble qualities of this old Lancashire worthy, are treasured up by the people of those parts of the country where he lived; especially in the neighbourhoods of Clayton Hall, near Manchester, and Turton Tower, near Bolton, his favourite residences. Castleton Hall

was an interesting place to me when I was a lad. As I pass by it now I sometimes think of the day when I first sauntered down the shady avenue, which leads to it from the highroad behind; and climbed up a mossy wall by the wayside, to look into the green gloom of a mysterious wood, which shades the rear of the building. Even now, I remember the flush of imaginations which came over me then. I had picked up some scraps of historic lore about the hall, which deepened the interest I felt in it. The solemn old rustling wood; the quaint appearance, and serene dignity of the hall; and the spell of interest which lingers around every decaying relic of the works and haunts of men of bygone times, made the place eloquent to me. It seemed to me, then, like a monumental history of its old inhabitants, and their times. I remember, too, that I once got a peep into a part of the hall, where, in those days, some old armour hung against the wall, silent and rusty enough, but, to me, teeming with tales of chivalry and knightly emprise. But, here is Rochdale station, where he, who wishes to visit the village of Milnrow, had better alight.

If the traveller had time and inclination to go down into Rochdale town, he might see some interesting things, old and new, there. The town is more picturesquely situated than most of the towns of South Lancashire. It lines the sides of a deep valley on the banks of the Roch, overlooked by moorland hills. In Saxon times it was an insignificant village, called "Rocheddam," consisting of a few rural dwellings in Church Lane, a steep and narrow old street, which was, down to the middle of last century, the principal street in the town, though now the meanest and obscurest. The famous John Bright, the Cromwell of modern politicians—a man of whom future generations of Englishmen will be prouder even than his countrymen are now—was born in this town, and lives at "One Ash," on the north side of it. John Roby, author of the "Traditions of Lancashire," was a banker, in Rochdale, of the firm of Fenton and Roby. The bank was next door to the shop of Thomas Holden, the principal bookseller of the town, to whom I was apprentice. For the clergy of the district, and for a certain class of politicians, this shop was the chief rendezvous of the place. Roby used to slip in at evening, to have a chat with my employer, and a knot of congenial spirits who met him there. In the days when my head was yet but a little way higher than the counter, I remember

how I used to listen to his versatile conversations. Rochdale was one of the few places where the woollen manufacture was first practised in England. It is still famous for its flannel. The history of Rochdale is in one respect but the counterpart of that of almost every other South Lancashire town. With the birth of cotton manufacture, it shot up suddenly into one of the most populous and wealthy country towns in England. After the traveller has contemplated the manufacturing might of the place, he may walk up the quaint street from which the woollen merchants of old used to dispatch their goods, on pack horses, to all parts of the kingdom; and from which it takes the name of "Packer Street." At the top, a flight of one hundred and twenty-two steps leads into the churchyard; which commands an excellent view of the town below. There, too, lies "Tim Bobbin." Few Lancashire strangers visit the town without looking at the old rhymer's resting-place. Bamford, author of "Passages in the Life of a Radical," thus chronicles an imaginary visit to Tim's grave, in happy imitation of the dialect of the neighbourhood:—

Aw stood beside Tim Bobbin grave,
At looks o'er Rachda teawn,
An th' owd lad woke within his yearth,
An sed, "Wheer arto beawn?"

Awm gooin into th' Packer-street,
As far as th' Gowden Bell,
To taste o' Daniel Kesmus ale.
TIM: "Aw could like a saup mysel"

An by this hont o' my reet arm,
If fro that hole theawl reawk,
Theawst have a saup oth' best breawn ale
At ever lips did seawk.

The greawnd it sturrd beneath meh feet,
An then aw yerd a groan,
He shook the dust fro off his skull,
An rowlt away the stone.

Aw brought him op a deep breawn jug,
At a gallon did contain:
He took it at one blessed droight,
And laid him deawn again.

Some of the epitaphs on the grave-stones were written by Tim. The following one, on Joe Green, the sexton, is published with Tim's works:—

Here lies Joe Green, who arch has been,
And drove a gainful trade,
With powerful Death, till out of breath,
He threw away his spade.
When Death beheld his comrade yield,
He like a cunning knave,
Came, soft as wind, poor Joe behind,
And pushed him into his grave

Near to this grave is the grave of Samuel Kershaw, blacksmith, bearing an epitaph which is generally attributed to the pen of Tim, though it does not appear among his writings:—

> My anvil and my hammer lie declined,
> My bellows, too, have lost their wind,
> My fire's extinct, my forge decayed,
> And in the dust my vice is laid.
> My coal is spent, my iron is gone,
> My last nail driven, and my work is done.

"Blind Abraham," who rang the curfew, and who used to imitate the chimes of Rochdale old church, in a wonderful way, for the lads at the Grammar School, could lead a stranger from any point of the churchyard, straight as an arrow's flight, to Tim's gravestone. The Grammar School was founded in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, by Archbishop Parker. The parish church is an interesting old edifice, standing on the edge of an eminence, which overlooks the town. Tradition says its foundations were laid by "Goblin Builders." The living was anciently dependent on the Abbey of Whalley. It is now the richest vicarage in the kingdom A short walk through the glebe lands, and past "Th' Cant-hill Well,"* west of the vicarage, will bring the traveller to the hill on which, in 1080, stood the castle of Gamel, the Saxon Thane, above the valley called "Kill-Danes," where the northern pirates once lost a great fight with the Saxon.

After spending a few days in the town, I set out for Milnrow, one fine afternoon. The road leads by the "Railway Inn," near the station. The hay was mostly gathered in, but the smell of it still lingered on the meadows, and perfumed the wind, which sung a low melody among the leaves of the hedges. Along the vale of the Roch, to the left, lay a succession of manufacturing villages, with innumerable mills, collieries, farmsteads, mansions, and cottages, clustering in the valley, and running up into the hills in all directions, from Rochdale to Littleborough, a distance of three miles. As I went on I was reminded of "wimberry-time," by meeting knots of flaxen-headed lads and lasses from the moors, with their baskets filled, and mouths all stained with the juice of that delicious moorland fruit. There are many pleasant customs in vogue here at this season. The country-folk generally know something of local

* Properly, "Th' Camp-hill Well," a well in what is called "Th Broad Feelt," where the Danes encamped, previously to their attack on the Saxon castle, and their slaughter at Kill-Danes, in the vale below.

botany; and gather in a stock of medicinal herbs to dry, for use throughout the year. There is still some "spo'in'" at the mineral springs in the hills. Whether these springs are really remarkable for peculiar mineral virtues, or what these peculiar virtues are, I am not prepared to say; but it is certain that many of the inhabitants of this district firmly believe in their medicinal qualities, and, at set seasons of the year, go forth to visit these springs, in jovial companies, to drink "spo wayter." Some go with great faith in the virtues of the water, and, having drunk well of it, they will sometimes fill a bottle with it, and ramble back to their houses, gathering on their way edible herbs, such as "payshun docks," and "green-sauce," or "a burn o' nettles," to put in their broth, and, of which, they also make a wholesome "yarb-puddin'," mixed with meal; or they scour the hill-sides in search of "mountain flax," a "capital yarb for a cowd;" and for the herb called "tormental," which, I have heard them say, grows oftenest "abeawt th' edge o' th' singing layrock neest;" or they will call upon some country botanist to beg a handful of "Solomon's seal," to "cure black e'en wi'." But some go to these springs mainly for the sake of a pleasant stroll and a quiet feast. One of the most noted of these "spo'in'" haunts is "Blue Pots Spring," situated upon a lofty moorland, at the head of a green glen, called "Long Clough," about three miles from the village of Littleborough. The ancient Lancashire festival of "Rushbearing," and the hay-harvest, fall together, in the month of August; and make it a pleasant time of the year to the folk of the neighbourhood. At about a mile on the road to Milnrow, the highway passes close by a green dingle, called "Th' Gentlewoman's Nook," which is someway connected with the unfortunate fate of a lady, once belonging to an influential family, near Milnrow. Some of the country people yet believe that the place is haunted; and, when forced to pass it after dark has come on, they steal fearfully and hastily by.

About a mile on the road stands Belfield Hall on the site of an ancient house, formerly belonging to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. It is a large old building, belonging to the Townley family. The estate has been much improved by its present occupant, and makes a pleasant picture in the eye from the top of a dinge in the road, at the foot of which a by-path leads up to the old village of Newbold, on the brow of a green bank, at

the right-hand side of the highway. I stood there a minute, and tried to plant again the old woods, that must have been thick there, when the squirrel leaped from tree to tree, from Castleton Hall to Buckley Wood. I was trying to shape in imagination what the place looked like in the old time, when the first rude hall was built upon the spot, and the country around was a lonesome tract, shrouded by primeval trees, when a special train went snorting by the back of the hall, and shivered my delicate endeavour to atoms. I sighed involuntarily; but bethinking me how imagination clothes all we are leaving behind in a drapery that veils many of its rough realities, I went my way, thankful for things as they are. A little further on, Fir Grove bridge crosses the Rochdale canal, and commands a better view of the surrounding country. I rested here a little while, and looked back upon the spot which is for ever dear to my remembrance. The vale of the Roch lay smiling before me, and the wide-stretching circle of dark hills closed in the landscape, on all sides, except the south-west. Two weavers were lounging on the bridge, bareheaded, and in their working gear, with stocking-legs drawn on their arms. They had come out of the looms to spend their "baggin-time" in the open air, and were humming one of their favourite songs:—

Hey Hal o' Nabs, an Sam, an Sue,
Hey Jonathan, art thea theer too,
We're o' alike, there's nought to do,
So bring a quart afore us.
Aw're at Tinker's gardens yester noon,
An' what aw see'd aw'll tell yo soon,
In a bran new sung; it's to th' owd tune
Yo'st ha't iv yo'n join chorus.
Fal, lal, de ral.

At the door of the Fir Grove ale-house, a lot of raw-boned young fellows were talking with rude emphasis about the exploits of a fighting-cock of great local renown, known by the bland sobriquet of "Crash-Bwons." The theme was exciting, and in the course of it they gesticulated with great vehemence, and, in their own phrase, "swore like horse-swappers." Some were colliers, and sat on the ground, in that peculiar squat, with the knees up to a level with the chin, which is a favourite resting-attitude with them. At slack times they like to sit thus by the road side, and exchange cracks over their ale, amusing themselves meanwhile by trying the wit and temper of every passer by. These humourous road-side commentators are,

generally, the roughest country lads of the neighbourhood, who have no dislike to anybody willing to accommodate them with a tough battle; for they, like the better regulated portion of the inhabitants of the district, are hardy, bold, and independent; and, while their manners are open and blunt, their training and amusements are very rough.

I was now approaching Milnrow; and, here and there, a tenter-field ribbed the landscape with lines of woollen webs, hung upon the hooks to dry. Severe laws were anciently enacted for the protection of goods thus necessarily exposed. Depredations on such property were punished after the manner of that savage old "Maiden" with the thin lip, who stood so long on the "Gibbet Hill," at Halifax, kissing evil-doers out of the world. Much of the famous Rochdale flannel is still woven by the country people here, in the old-fashioned, independent way, at their own homes, as the traveller will see by "stretchers," which are used for drying their warps upon, so frequently standing at the doors of the roomy dwelling-houses near the road. From the head of the brow which leads down into the village, Milnrow chapel is full in view on a green hill-side to the left, overlooking the centre of the busy little hamlet. It is a bald-looking building from the distance, having more the appearance of a little square factory than a church. Lower down the same green eminence, which slopes to the edge of the little river Beal, stands the pleasant and tasteful, but modest residence of the incumbent of Milnrow, the Rev. Francis Robert Raines, honorary canon of Manchester, a notable archæologist and historian; much beloved by the people of the locality.

There are old people still living in Milnrow, who were taught to read and write, and "do sums" in Tim Bobbin's school; yet, the majority of the inhabitants seem unacquainted with his residence. I had myself been misled respecting it; but having obtained correct information, and a reference from a friend in Rochdale to an old relative of his who lived in the veritable cottage of renowned Tim, I set about inquiring for him. As I entered the village, I met a sturdy, good-looking woman, with a chocolate-coloured silk kerchief tied over her snowy cap, in that graceful way which is known all over the country-side as a "Mildro Bonnet." She stopt me and said, "Meastur, hea fur han yo com'd?" "From Rochdale." "Han yo sin aught ov a felley wi breeches on, an' rayther forrud, upo' th' gate, between

an' th' Fir Grove?" I told her I had not; and I then inquired for Scholefield that lived in Tim Bobbin's cottage. She reckoned up all the people she knew of that name, but none of them answering the description, I went on my way. I next asked a tall woollen-weaver, who was striding up the street with his shuttle to the mending. Scratching his head, and looking thoughtfully round among the houses, he said, "Scwofil? Aw know no Scwofils, but thoose at th' Tim Bobbin aleheawse; yodd'n better ash (ask) theer." Stepping over to the Tim Bobbin inn, Mrs. Schofield described to me the situation of Tim's cottage, near the bridge. Retracing my steps towards the place, I went into the house of an old acquaintance of my childhood. On the strength of a dim remembrance of my features, he invited me to sit down, and share the meal just made ready for the family. "Come, poo a cheer up," said he, "an' need no moo lathein'."* After we had finished, he said, "Neaw, win yo have a reech o' bacco? Mally, reytch us some pipes, an th' pot out o'th nook. Let's see, who's lad are yo, sen yo? for aw welly forgetten, bith mass." After a fruitless attempt at enlightening him thereon in ordinary English, I took to the dialect, and in the country fashion described my genealogy, on the mother's side. I was instantly comprehended; for he stopt me short with—"Whau then, aw'll be sunken iv yo are not gron'son to 'Billy, wi' th' pipes, at th' Biggins.'" "Yo han it neaw," said I. "Eh," replied he, "aw knowed him as weel as aw knew my own feythur! He're a terrible chap for music, an' sich like; an' he used to letter grave-stones, an' do mason-wark. Eh, aw've bin to mony a orrytory wi' Owd Billy. Why,—let's see—Owd Wesley preytched at his heawse, i' Wardle fowd once't.† An' han yo some relations i' th' Mildro, then?" I told him my errand, and inquired for Scholefield, who lived in Tim Bobbin's cottage. As he pondered, and turned the name over in his mind, one of his lads shouted out, "By th' mon, feyther,

* *Lathein'*—inviting.

† John Leach, of Wardle, was a notable man among the early Methodists, and was one of Wesley's first preachers. He was my grandmother's uncle. In Southey's Life of Wesley, I find the following note respecting him, under the head, "OUTCRY AGAINST METHODISM. VIOLENCE OF MOBS, AND MISCONDUCT OF MAGISTRATES:" When John Leach was pelted, near Rochdale, in those riotous days, and saw his brother wounded in the forehead by a stone, he was mad enough to tell the rabble that not one of them could hit him, if he were to stand preaching there till midnight. Just then the mob began to quarrel among themselves, and, therefore, left off pelting But the anecdote has been related by his brethren for his praise.

it's 'Owd Mahogany.' Aw think he's code (called) Scwofil, an' he lives i'th garden at th' botham o'th bonk, by th' waytur side." It was generally agreed that this was the place, so I parted with my friends and went towards it. The old man came out without his hat, a short distance, to set me right. After bidding me a hearty "good neet," he turned round as he walked away, and shouted out, "Neaw tay care yo coan, th' next time yo com'n thiz gate, an' wi'n have a gradely do."

About twenty yards from the west end of the little stone bridge that spans the river, a lane leads, between the ends of the dwelling houses, down to the water side. There, still sweetly secluded, stands the quaint, substantial cottage of John Collier, in its old garden by the edge of the Beal, which, flowing through the fields in front, towards the cottage, is there dammed up into a reservoir for the use of the mill close by, and then tumbling over in a noisy little fall under the garden edge, goes shouting and frolicking along the north-east side of it, over water-worn rocks, and under the bridge, till the cadence dies away in a low murmur, beyond, where the bed of the stream gets smoother. Lifting the latch, I walked through the garden, to the cottage, where I found "Owd Mahogany" and his maiden sister, two plain, clean, substantial working-people, who were sitting in the low-roofed, but otherwise roomy apartment in front, used as a kitchen. They entered heartily into the purpose of my visit, and showed me everything about the house with a genial pride. What made the matter more interesting was the fact, that "Owd Mahogany had been, when a lad, a pupil of Collier's. The house was built expressly for Tim, by his father-in-law; and the uncommon thickness of the walls, the number and arrangement of the rooms, and the remains of a fine old oak staircase, showed that more than usual care and expense had been bestowed upon it. As we went through the rooms on the ground-floor, my ancient guide gave me a good deal of anecdote connected with each. Pointing to a clean, cold, white-washed cell, with a great flag table in it, and a grid-window at one end, he said, "This wur his buttery, wheer he kept pullen,* an gam, an sich like; for thir no mon i' Rachdaw parish liv't betther nor Owd Tim, nor moor like a gentleman; nor one at had moor friends, gentle an simple. Th' Teawnlo's took'n to him

* *Pullen*—poultry.

fearfully, an thir'n olez comin' to see him; or sendin' him presents o' some mak'." He next showed me the parlour where he used to write and receive company. A little oblong room, low in the roof, and dimly lighted by a small window from the garden. Tim used to keep this retiring sanctum tastefully adorned with the flowers of each season, and one might have eaten his dinner off the floor in his time. In the garden he pointed out the corner where Tim had a roomy green arbor, with a smooth stone table in the middle, on which lay his books, his flute, or his meals, as he was in the mood. He would stretch himself out here, and muse for hours together. The lads used to bring their tasks from the school behind the house, to this arbor, for Tim to examine. He had a green shaded walk from the school into his garden. When in the school, or about the house, he wore a silk velvet skull-cap. The famous radical, William Cobbett, used to wear a similar one, occasionally; and I have heard those who have seen both in this trim, say that the likeness of the two men was then singularly striking. "Owd Mahogany" having now shown and told me many interesting things respecting Tim's house and habits, entered into a hearty eulogy upon his character as a man and a schoolmaster. "He're a fine, straight-forrud mon, wi' no maffle abeawt him; for o' his quare, cranky ways." As an author, he thought him "Th' fine'st writer at Englan' bred, at that time o' th' day." Of his caligraphy, too, he seemed particulary proud, for he declared that "Tim could write a clear print hond, as smo' as smithy smudge," He finished by saying, that he saw him carried out of the door-way we were standing in, to his grave.

At the edge of dark, I bade adieu to Tim's cottage, and the comfortable old couple that live in it. As I looked back from the garden-gate, the house wore a plaintive aspect, in my imagination; as if it was thinking of its fine old tenant. Having heard that there was something uncommon to be learnt of him at the Tim Bobbin Inn, I went there again. It is the largest and most respectable public-house in the village, kept in a fine state of homely comfort by a motherly old widow. I found that she could tell me something of the quaint schoolmaster and his wife "Mary," who, as she said, "helped to bring her into th' world." She brought out a folio volume of engravings from designs by Tim, with many pieces of prose and verse of his, in engraved fac-simile of his hand-writing. The book was bound in dark

morocco, with the author's name on the side, in gold. I turned it over with pleasure, for there were things in it not found in any edition of his works. The landlady shows this book with some pride to Tim's admirers; by some she had been offered large sums of money for it; and once a party of curious visitors had well-nigh carried it off by stealth in their carriage, after making fruitless offers of purchase; but the plan was detected in time, and the treasure restored to its proper custody. I read in it one of his addresses to his subscribers, in which he says of himself: "He's Lancashire born; and, by the by, all his acquaintance agree, his wife not excepted, that he's an odd-fellow. . . . In the reign of Queen Anne he was a boy, and one of the nine children of a poor curate in Lancashire, whose stipend never amounted to thirty pounds a-year, and consequently the family must feel the iron teeth of penury with a witness. These indeed were sometimes blunted by the charitable disposition of the good rector (the Rev. Mr. H——, of W——n): so this T. B. lived as some other boys did, content with water-pottage, buttermilk, and jannock, till he was between thirteen and fourteen years of age, when Providence began to smile on him in his advancement to a pair of Dutch looms, when he met with treacle to his pottage, and sometimes a little in his buttermilk, or spread on his jannock. However, the reflections of his father's circumstances (which now and then start up and still edge his teeth) make him believe that Pluralists are no good Christians; that he who will accept of two or more places of one hundred a-year, would not say *I have enough*, though he was Pope Clement, Urban, or Boniface,—could affirm himself infallible, and offer his toe to kings: that the unequal distribution of Church emoluments is as great a grievance in the ecclesiastic, as undeserved pensions and places are in the state; both of which, he presumes to prophesy, will prove canker-worms at the roots of those succulent plants, and in a few years cause leaf and branch to shrivel up, and dry them to tinder." The spirit of this passage seems the natural growth, in such a mind as his, of the curriculum of study in the hard college of Tim's early days. In the thrifty home of the poor Lancashire curate, though harrowed by "the iron teeth of penury," Tim inherited riches that wealth cannot buy. Under the tuition of a good father, who could study his reflective and susceptible mind, and teach him many excellent things; together with that hard struggle to keep the wolf from

the door of his childhood, which pressed upon his thoughts, he grew up contemplative, self-reliant, and manly, on oatmeal porridge, and jannock, with a little treacle for a god-send. His feelings were deepened, and his natural love of independence strengthened there, with that hatred of all kinds of injustice, which flashes through the rich humour and genial kindness of his nature,—for nature was strong in him, and he relished her realities. Poverty is not pleasant, yet the world has more to thank poverty for than it dreams of. With honourable pride he fought his way to a pair of Dutch looms, where he learned to win his jannock and treacle by honest weaving. Subsequently he endeavoured to support himself honourably, by pursuits no less useful, but more congenial to the bias of his faculties; but, to the last, his heart's desire was less to live in external plenty and precedence among men, than to live conscientiously, in the sweet relations of honourable independence in the world. This feeling was strong in him, and gives dignity to his character. As a politician, John Collier was considerably ahead of the time he lived in, and especially of the simple, slow-minded race of people dwelling, then, in that remote nook of Lancashire, at the foot of Blackstone Edge. Among such people, and in such a time, he spoke and wrote things, which few men dared to write and speak. He spoke, too, in a way which was as independent and pithy as it was quaintly-expressive. His words, like his actions, stood upon their own feet, and looked up. Perhaps, if he had been a man of a drier nature,—of less genial and attractive genius than he was,—he might have had to suffer more for the enunciation of truths, and the recognition of principles which were unfashionable in those days. But Collier was not only a man of considerable valour and insight, with a manly mind and temper, but he was also genial and humourous, as he was earnest and honest. He was an eminently human-hearted man, who abhorred all kinds of cant and seeming. His life was a greater honour to him even than his quaint pencil, or his pen; and the memory of his sayings and doings will be long and affectionately cherished, at least, by Lancashire men.

> Eh! Whoo-who-whoo! What wofo wark!
> He's laft um aw, to lie i' th' dark.

The following brief memoir, written by his friend and patron, Richard Townley, Esq., of Belfield Hall, near Milnrow, for insertion in Dr. Aiken's "History of the Environs of Manchester,"

contains the best and completest account of his life and character, which has yet appeared:—

Mr. JOHN COLLIER, *alias* TIM BOBBIN, was born near Warrington, in Lancashire; his father, a clergyman of the Established Church, had a small curacy, and for several years taught a school. With the joint income of those, he managed so as to maintain a wife and several children decently, and also to give them a tolerable share of useful learning, until a dreadful calamity befel him, about his fortieth year—the total loss of sight. His former intentions of bringing up his son, John—of whose abilities he had conceived a favourable opinion—to the church, were then over, and he placed him out an apprentice to a Dutch loom-weaver, at which business he worked more than a year; but such a sedentary employment not at all according with his volatile spirits and eccentric genius, he prevailed upon his master to release him from the remainder of his servitude. Though then very young, he soon commenced itinerant schoolmaster, going about the country from one small town to another, to teach reading, writing, and accounts; and generally having a night-school (as well as a day one), for the sake of those whose necessary employments would not allow their attendance at the usual school hours.

In one of his adjournments to the small but populous town of Oldham, he had an intimation that the Rev. Mr. Pearson, curate and schoolmaster, of Milnrow, near Rochdale, wanted an assistant in the school. To that gentleman he applied, and after a short examination, was taken in by him to the school, and he divided his salary, twenty pounds a year, with him. This Tim considered as a material advance in the world, as he still could have a night-school, which answered very well in that populous neighbourhood, and was considered by Tim, too, as a state of independency; a favourite idea, ever afterwards, with his high spirits. Mr. Pearson, not very long afterwards, falling a martyr to the gout, my honoured father gave Mr. Collier the school, which not only made him happy in the thought of being more independent, but made him consider himself as a rich man.

Having now more leisure hours by dropping his night-school there, though he continued to teach at Oldham, and some other places, during the vacations of Whitsuntide and Christmas, he began to instruct himself in music and drawing, and soon was such a proficient in both as to be able to instruct others very well in those amusing arts.

The hautboy and common flute were his chief instruments, and upon the former he very much excelled; the fine modulations that have since been acquired, or introduced upon that noble instrument, being then unknown in England. He drew landscapes in good taste, understanding the rules of perspective, and attempted some heads in profile, with very decent success: but it did not hit his humour, for I have heard him say, when urged to go on in that line, that "drawing heads and faces was as dry and insipid as leading a life without frolic and fun, unless he was allowed to steal in some leers of comic humour, or to give them a good dash of the caricature." Very early in life he discovered some poetic talents, or rather an easy habit for humourous rhyme, by several anonymous squibs he sent about in ridicule of some notoriously absurd, or eccentric characters; these were fathered upon him very justly, which created him some enemies, but more friends. I had once in my possession some humourous relations in tolerable rhyme, of his own frolic and fun with persons he met with, of the like description, in his hours of festive humour, which was sure to take place when released for any time from school duty, and not too much engaged in his lucrative employment of painting. The first regular poetic composition which he published, was "The Blackbird," containing some spirited ridicule upon a Lancashire Justice, more renowned for political zeal and ill-timed loyalty than good sense and discretion. In point of easy, regular versification, perhaps this was his best specimen, and it also exhibited some strokes of humour.

About this period of life he fell seriously in love with a handsome young woman, a daughter of Mr. Clay, of Flockton, near Huddersfield, and soon after took her unto him for a wife, or, as he used to style her, his crooked rib, who, in proper time, increased his family, and proved to be a virtuous, discreet, sensible, and prudent woman, a good wife, and an excellent mother. His family continuing to increase nearly every year, the hautboy, flute, and amusing pencil were pretty much discarded, and the brush and pallet taken up seriously. He was chiefly engaged for some time in painting altar-pieces for chapels and signs for publicans, which pretty well rewarded the labours of his vacant hours from school attendance: but after some time, family expenses increasing more with his family, he devised, or luckily hit upon, a more

lucrative employment for his leisure hours:—this was copying Dame Nature in some of her humourous performances, and grotesque sportings with the human face (especially where the visage had the greatest share in those sportings), into which his pencil contrived to throw some pointed features of grotesque humour, such as were best adapted to excite risibility, as long as such strange objects had the advantage of novelty to recommend them. These pieces he worked off with uncommon celerity: a single portrait in the leisure hours of two days, at least, and a group of three or four in a week. As soon as finished, he was wont to carry them to the first-rate inns at Rochdale and Littleborough, in the great road to Yorkshire, with the lowest prices fixed upon them, the innkeepers willingly becoming Tim's agents. The droll humour, as well as singularity of style of those pieces, procured him a most ready sale, from riders out, and travellers of other descriptions, who had heard of Tim's character. These whimsical productions soon began to be in such general repute, that he had large orders for them, especially from merchants in Liverpool, who sent them, upon speculation, into the West Indies and America. He used, at that time, to say, that "if Providence had ever meant him to be a rich man, that would have been the proper time, especially if she had kindly bestowed upon him two pair of hands instead of one;" but when cash came in readily, it was sure to go merrily: a cheerful glass with a joyous companion was so much in unison with his own disposition, that a temptation of that kind could never be resisted by poor Tim; so the season to grow rich never arrived, but Tim remained poor Tim to the end of the chapter.

Collier had been for many years collecting, not only from the rustics in his own neighbourhood, but also wherever he made excursions, all the awkward, vulgar, obsolete words, and local expressions, which ever occurred to him in conversation amongst the lower classes. A very retentive memory brought them safe back for insertion in his vocabulary, or glossary, and from thence he formed and executed the plan of his "Lancashire Dialect," which he exhibited to public cognizance in the "Adventures of a Lancashire Clown," formed from some rustic sports and gambols, and also some whimsical modes of circulating fun at the expense of silly, credulous boobies amongst the then cheery gentlemen of that peculiar neighbourhood. This publication, from its novelty, together with some real strokes of comic humour interlarded into it, took very much with the middle and lower class of people in the northern counties (and I believe everywhere in the South, too, where it had the chance of being noticed), so that a new edition was soon necessary. This was a matter of exultation to Tim, but not of very long duration, for the rapid sale of the second edition soon brought forth two or three pirated editions, which made the honest, unsuspecting owner to exclaim with great vehemence, "that he did not believe there was one honest printer in Lancashire;" and afterwards to lash some of the most culpable of those insidious offenders with his keen, sarcastic pen, when engaged in drawing up a preface to a future publication. The above-named performances, with his pencil, his brush, and his pen, made Tim's name and repute for whimsical archness pretty generally known, not only within his native county, but also through the adjoining counties of Yorkshire and Cheshire: and his repute for a peculiar species of pleasantry in his hours of frolic, often induced persons of much higher rank to send for him to an inn (when in the neighbourhood of his residence), to have a personal specimen of his uncommon drollery. Tim was seldom backward in obeying a summons to good cheer, and seldom, I believe, disappointed the expectations of his generous host, for he had a wonderful flow of spirits, with an inexhaustible fund of humour, and that, too, of a very peculiar character.

Blest with a clear and masculine understanding, and a keen discernment into the humours and foibles of others, he knew how to take the best advantage of those occasional interviews in order to promote trade, as he was wont to call it, though his natural temper was very far from being of a mercenary cast; it was often rather too free and generous; more so than prudence, with respect to his family, would advise, for he would sooner have had a lenten day or two at home, than done a shabby and mean thing abroad.

Amongst other persons of good fortune, who often called upon him at Milnrow, or sent for him to spend a few hours with him at Rochdale, was a Mr. Richard Hill, of Kibroid and Halifax, in Yorkshire, then one of the greatest cloth merchants, and also one of the most considerable manufacturers of baizes and shalloons in the north of England. This gentleman was not only fond of his humourous conversation, but also had taken up an opinion that he would be highly useful to him as his head clerk, in business, from his being very ready at accounts, and writing a most beautiful small hand, in any kind of type, but especially in imitation of printed characters

After several fruitless attempts, he at last, by offers of an extravagant salary, prevailed upon Mr. Collier to enter into articles of service for three years, certain, and to take his family to Kibroid. After signing and sealing, he called upon me to give notice that he must resign the school, and to thank me for my long-continued friendship to him. At taking leave, he, like the honest Moor—

> Albeit, unused to the melting mood,
> Dropped tears as fast as the Arabian tree,
> Their medicinal gum.

And, in faltering accents, entreated me not to be too hasty in filling up the vacancy in that school, where he had lived so many years contented and happy: for he had already some forebodings that he should never relish his new situation and new occupation. I granted his request, but hoped he would soon reconcile himself to his new situation, as it promised to be so advantageous both to himself and family. He replied, that "it was for the sake of his wife and children, that he was at last induced to accept Mr. Hill's very tempting offers, no other consideration whatever could have made him give up Milnrow school, and independency."

About two months afterwards, some business of his master's bringing him to Rochdale market, he took that opportunity of returning by Belfield. I instantly perceived a wonderful change in his looks: that countenance which used ever to be gay, serene, or smiling, was then covered, or disguised with a pensive, settled gloom. On asking him how he liked his new situation at Kibroid, he replied, "Not at all;" then, enumerating several causes for discontent, concluded with an observation, that "he never could abide the ways of that country, for they neither kept red-letter days themselves nor allowed their servants to keep any." Before he left me, he passionately entreated that I would not give away the school, for he should never be happy again until he was seated in the crazy old elbow chair within his school. I granted his request, being less anxious to fill up the vacancy, as there were two other free schools for the same uses within the same townships, which have decent salaries annexed to them.

Some weeks afterwards I received a letter from Tim, that he had some hopes of getting released from his vassalage; for, that the father having found out what very high wages his son had agreed to give him, was exceedingly angry with him for being so extravagant in his allowance to a clerk; that a violent quarrel betwixt them had been the consequence; and from that circumstance he meant—at least hoped—to derive some advantage in the way of regaining his liberty, which he lingered after, and panted for, as much as any galley-slave upon earth.

Another letter announced that his master perceived that he was dejected, and had lost his wonted spirits and cheerfulness: had hinted to him, that if he disliked his present situation, he should be released at the end of the year; concluding his letter with a most earnest imploring that I would not dispose of the school before that time. By the interposition of the old gentleman, and some others, he got the agreement cancelled a considerable time before the year expired; and the evening of the day when the liberation took place, he hired a large Yorkshire cart to bring away bag and baggage by six o'clock next morning, to his own house, at Milnrow. When he arrived upon the west side of Blackstone Edge, he thought himself once more a FREE MAN; and his heart was as light as a feather. The next morning he came up to Belfield, to know if he might take possession of his school again; which being readily consented to, tears of gratitude instantly streamed down his cheeks, and such a suffusion of joy illumined his countenance, as plainly bespoke the heart being in unison with his looks. He then declared his unalterable resolution never more to quit the humble village of Milnrow; that it was not in the power of kings, nor their prime ministers, to make him any offers, if so disposed, that would allure him from his tottering elbow chair, from humble fare, with liberty and contentment. A hint was thrown out that he must work hard with his pencil, his brush, and his pen, to make up the deficiency in income to his family; that he promised to do, and was as good as his promise, for he used double diligence, so that the inns at Rochdale and Littleborough were soon ornamented, more than ever, with ugly grinning old fellows, and mambling old women on broomsticks, &c., &c.

Tim's last literary productions, as I recollect, were "Remarks upon the Rev. Mr. Whittaker's History of Manchester, in two parts:" the "Remarks" will speak for themselves. There appears rather too much seasoning and salt in some of them, mixed with a degree of acerbity for which he was rather blamed.

Mr. Collier died in possession of his faculties, with his mental powers but little impaired, at nearly eighty years of age, and his eyesight was not so much injured as

might have been expected from such a severe use of it, during so long a space of time. His wife died a few years before him, but he left three sons and two daughters behind him.

In a sketch like this, it is not easy to select such examples from Collier's writings as will give an adequate idea of their manner and significance. His inimitable story, called "Tummus and Meary," will bear no mutilation. Of his rhymes, perhaps the best is the one called "The Blackbird." The following extract from Tim's preface to the third edition of his works, in the form of a dialogue between the author and his book, though far from the best thing he has written, contains some very characteristic touches :—

Tim. Well, boh we'n had enough o' this foisty matter; let's talk o' summat elze; an furst tell me heaw thea went on eh thi last jaunt.

Book. Gu on! Beladay, aw could ha' gwon on wheantly, an' bin awhoam again wi' th' crap eh meh slop in a snift, iv id na met, at oytch nook, thoose basthartly whelps sent eawt be *Stuart, Finch*, an *Schofield*.

Tim. Pooh! I dunnot meeon heaw folk harbort'nt an cutternt o'er-tho; boh what thoose fause Lunnoners said'n abeawt te jump, at's new o'er-bodyt.

Book. Oh, oh! Neaw aw ha't! Yo meeon'n thoose lung-seeted folk at glooar'n a second time at books; an whoea awr fyert would rent meh jump to chatters.

Tim. Reet mon, reet; that's it,—

Book. Whau then, to tello true, awr breeod wi' a gorse waggin'; for they took'n mo i'th reet leet to a yure.

Tim. Heaw's tat,, eh Gods'num!

Book. Whau, at yoad'n donned mo o' thiss'n, like a meawntebank's foo, for th' wonst, to mey th' rablement fun.

Tim. Eh, law! An did'n th' awvish shap, an th' peckl't jump pan, said'n they?

Book. Aye, aye: primely i'faith!—for they glooarn't sooar at mo; turn't mo reawnd like a tayliur, when he mezzurs folk; chuckt mo under th' chin; ga' mo a honey butter-cake, an said oppenly, they ne'er saigh an awkert look, a quare shap, an a peckl't jump gee better eh their live.

Tim. Neaw, e'en fair fa' um, say aw! These wur'n th' boggarts at flayd'n tho! But aw'd olez a notion at tear'n no gonnor-yeds.

Book. Gonner-yeds! Naw, naw, not te marry! Boh, aw carry 't mysel' meety meeverly too-to, an did as o bidd'n mo.

Tim. Then theaw towd um th' tale, an said th' rimes an aw, did to?

Book. Th' tale an th' rimes! 'Sflesh, aw believe eh did; boh aw know no moor on um neaw than a seawkin' pig.

Tim. 'Od rottle the; what says to? Has to foryeat'n th' tayliur findin' th' urchon; an th' rimes?

Book. Quite, quite; as eh hope to chieve!

Tim. Neaw e'en the dule steawnd to, say aw! What a fuss mun aw have to teytch um tho again!

Book. Come, come; dunna fly up in a frap; a body conno carry oytch mander o' think eh their nob.

Tim. Whau boh, mind neaw, theaw gawmblin' tyke, at to can tell th' tale an say th' rimes be rot tightly.

Book. "Fear me na," said Doton; begin.

Tim. A tayliur, eh Crummil's time, wur thrunk pooin' turmits in his pingot, an fund an urchon i'th hadloont reean.* He glendurt at't lung, boh could may nowt on't. He whoav't hi whisket o'ert, runs whoam, an tells his neighbours he thowt in his guts at he'd fund a think at God ne'er made eawt, for it'd nother yed nor tale, nor hont nor hough, nor midst nor eend! Loath t' believe this, hauve a dozen on um would gu t' see iv they could'n may shift t' gawm it; boh it capt um aw; for they newer a one on um e'er saigh th' like afore. Then theyd'n a keawncil, an th' eend

* *Hadloont reean*—headland gutter.

on't wur at teyd'n fotch a lawm, fause owd felly, het* an elder, at could tell oytch think,—for they look'nt on him as th' hamil-scoance. an thowt him fuller o' leet than a glow-worm's a—se. When they'n towd him th' case, he stroke't his beeart; sowght; an order't th' wheelbarrow wi' spon-new trindle t' be fotcht. 'Twur dun; an they beawln't him away to th' urchon in a crack. He glooart at't a good while; dried his beeart deawn, an wawtud it o'er with his crutch. "Wheel me abeawt again, o'th tother side," said he, "for it sturs, an by that, it should be wick." Then he dons his spectacles, stare't at't again, an sowghin', said, "Breether, its summat: boh feyther Adam nother did, nor could kersun it. Wheel mo whoam again!"

Book. Aw remember it neaw, weel enough; boh iv these viewers could gawm it oytch body couldna; for aw find neaw at yo compare'n me to a urchon, ut has nother yed nor tale; 'sflesh, is not it like running mo deawn, an a bit to bobbersome.

Tim. Naw, naw, not it; for meeny o' folk would gawm th' rimes, boh very lite would underston th' tayliur an his urchon.

Book. Th' rimes;—hum,—lemme see. 'Sblid, aw foryeat'n thoose, too, aw deawt!

Tim. Whoo-who whoo! What a dozening jobberknow art teaw!

Book. Good lorjus o' me; a body conna do moor thin they con, con they? Boh iv in teytch mo again, an aw foryeat um again, e'en raddle meh hoyd tightly, say aw.

Tim. Mind te hits, then!

Some write to show their wit and parts,
Some show you whig, some tory hearts.
Some flatter *knaves*, some *fops*, some *fools*,
And some are ministerial tools.

Book. Eigh, marry; oytch body says so; an gonnor-yeds they are for their labbor

Tim. Some few in virtue's cause do write,
But these, alas! get little by't.

Book. Indeed, aw can believe o! Weel rime't, heawe'er; gu on.

Tim. Some turn out maggots from their head,
Which die before their author's dead.

Book. Zuns! Aw Englanshire 'll think at yo'r glentin' at toose fratchin', byzen, craddlinly tykes as write'n sich papers as th' *Test*, an sich cawve-tales as *Cornish Peter*, at fund a new ward, snyin' wi glums an gawries.

Tim. Some write such sense in prose and rhyme,
Their works will wrestle hard with Time.

Book. That'll be prime wrostlin', i'faith; for aw've yerd um say, time conquers aw things.

Tim. Some few print *truth*, but many *lies*
On *spirits*, down to *butterflies*.

Book. Reet abeawt boggarts; an th' tother ward; and th' mon i'th moon, an sich like gear: get eendway; it's prime, i'faith.

Tim. Some write to *please*, some do't for *spite*,
But want of money makes me write.

Book. By th' mass, th' owd story again! Boh aw think eh me guts at it's true. It'll do; yo need'n rime no moor, for it's better t'in lickly. Whewt† on Tummus an Mary.

To a liberal and observant stranger, one of the richest results of a visit to this quarter will arise from contemplation of the well-defined character of the people that live in it. The whole population is distinguished by a fine, strong, natural character, which would do honour to the refinements of education. A genteel stranger, who cannot read the heart of this people through their blunt manners, will, perhaps, think them a little boorish. But though they have not much bend in the neck, and their rough dialect is little blest with the set phrases of courtesy, there are no braver men in the world, and under their uncouth de-

* *Het*—hight, called † *Whewt*—whistle.

meanour lives the spirit of true chivalry. They have a favourite proverb, that "fair play's a jewel," and are generally careful, in all their dealings, to act upon it. They feel a generous pride in the man who can prove himself their master in anything. Unfortunately, little has yet been done for them in the way of book-education, except what has been diffused by the Sunday-schools, since the times of their great apostle, John Wesley, who, in person, as well as by his enthusiastic early preachers, laboured much and earnestly among them, in many parts of South Lancashire. Yet nature has blest them with a fine vein of mother-wit, and has drilled some useful pages of her horn-book into them in the loom, the mine, and the farm, for they are naturally hard workers, and proud of honest labour. They are keen critics of character, too, and have a sharp eye to the nooks and corners of a stranger's attire, to see that, at least, whether rich or poor, it be sound, and, as they say, "bothomly cleeon," for they are jealous of dirty folk. They are accustomed to a frank expression of what is in them, and like the open countenance, where the time of day may be read in the dial, naturally abhorring "hudd'n wark, an' meawse-neeses." Among the many anecdotes illustrative of the character of this people, there is one which, though simple, bears a strong stamp of native truth upon it. A stalwart young fellow, who had long been employed as carter for a firm in this neighbourhood, had an irresistible propensity to fighting, which was constantly leading him into scrapes. He was an excellent servant in every other respect, but no admonition could cure him of this; and at length he was discharged, in hope to work the desired change. Dressing himself in his best, he applied to an eminent native merchant for a similar situation. After other necessary questions, the merchant asked whether he had brought his character with him. "My character!" replied our hero, "Naw, aw'm a damned deeol better beawt it!" This anecdote conveys a very true idea of the rough vigour and candour of the Lancashire country population. They dislike dandyism and the shabby-genteel, and the mere bandbox exquisite would think them a hopeless generation. Yet, little as they are tinctured with literature, a few remarkable books are very common among them. I could almost venture to prophesy before going into any substantial farmhouse, or any humble cottage in this quarter, that some of the following books might be found there: the Bible, Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, the Book of Common Prayer,

and often Wesley's Hymn-book, Barclay's Dictionary, Culpepper's Herbal; and, sometimes, Thomas à Kempis, or a few old puritan sermons. One of their chief delights is the practice of sacred music; and I have heard the works of Haydn, Handel, Mozart, and Beethoven executed with remarkable correctness and taste, in the lonely farmhouses and cottages of South Lancashire. In no other part of England does such an intense love of sacred music pervade the poorer classes. It is not uncommon for them to come from the farthest extremity of South Lancashire, and even over the "Edge" from Huddersfield, and other towns of the West Riding of Yorkshire, to hear an oratorio at the Free Trade Hall, returning home again, sometimes a distance of thirty miles, in the morning.

I will now suppose that the traveller has seen Tim Bobbin's grave, and has strolled up by Silver Hills, through the scenery of Butterworth, and, having partly contemplated the character of this genuine specimen of a South Lancashire village, is again standing on the little stone bridge which spans the pretty river Beal. Let him turn his back to the Rochdale road a little while; we have not done with him yet. Across the space there, used as a fair ground at "Rushbearing time," stands an old-fashioned stone ale-house, called "Th' Stump and Pie Lad," commemorating, by its scabbed and weather-beaten sign, one of the triumphs of a noted Milnrow foot-racer, on Doncaster race-course. Milnrow is still famous for its foot-racers, as Lancashire, generally, is more particularly famous for foot-racers than any other county in the kingdom. In that building the ancient lords of Rochdale manor used to hold their court-leets. Now, the dry-throated "lads o' th' fowd" meet there nightly, to grumble at bad warps and low wages; and to "fettle th' nation," over pitchers of cold ale. And now, if the traveller loves to climb "the slopes of old renown," and worships old heraldries and rusty suits of mail, let him go to the other end of the village. I will go with him, if, like me, while he venerates old chronicles, whether of stone, metal, or parchment, because the spirit of the bygone sometimes streams upon us through them, he still believes in the proverb, that "every man is the son of his own works;" I will play the finger-post to him with right good will. There is something at the other end of Milnrow worth his notice.

Milnrow lies on the ground not unlike a tall tree laid length-

wise, in a valley, by a river side. At the bridge, its roots spread themselves in clots and fibrous shoots, in all directions; while the almost branchless trunk runs up, with a little bend, above half a mile, towards Oldham, where it again spreads itself out in an umbrageous way, at the little fold called "Butterworth Hall." In walking through the village, he who has seen a tolerably-built wooden mill will find no wonders of the architectural art at all. The houses are almost entirely inhabited by working people, and marked by a certain rough, comfortable solidity—not a bad reflex of the character of the inhabitants. At the eastern extremity, a road leads on the left hand to the cluster of houses called "Butterworth Hall." This old fold is worth notice, both for what it is, and what it has been. It is a suggestive spot. It is near the site once occupied by one of the homesteads of the Byrons, barons of Rochdale, the last baron of which family was Lord Byron, the poet. A gentleman in this township, who is well acquainted with the history and archæology of the whole county, lately met with a licence from the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, dated A.D. 1400, granting to Sir John Byron and his wife leave to have divine service performed within their oratories at Clayton and Butterworth, in the county of Lancashire. (Lanc. MSS., vol. xxxii., p. 184.) This was doubtless the old *wooden chapel* which traditionally is said to have existed at Butterworth Hall, and which is still pointed out by the names of two small fields, called "Chapel Yard" and "Chapel Meadow." These names occur in deeds at Pike House (the residence of the Halliwell family, about two miles off), in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and are known to this day. It is probable that the Byrons never lived at Butterworth Hall after the Wars of the Roses. They quitted Clayton, as a permanent residence, on acquiring Newstead, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, although "young Sir John," as he was called, lived at Royton Hall, near Oldham, another seat of the family, between 1592 and 1608.

At Butterworth Hall, the little river Beal, flowing down fresh from the heathery mountains, which throw their shadows upon the valley where it runs, divides the fold; and upon a green plot, close to the northern margin of its water, stands an old-fashioned stone hall, hard by the site of the ancient residence of the Byrons. After spending an hour at the other end of the village, with the rugged and comfortable generation dwelling there, among the

memorials of "Tim Bobbin"—that quaint old schoolmaster, of the last century—who was "the observed of all observers," there, in his day, and who will be remembered long after some of the monumental brasses and sculptured effigies of his contemporaries are passed by with incurious eyes—one thinks it will not be uninteresting, nor profitless, to come and muse a little upon the spot where the Byrons once lived in feudal state. But let not any contemplative visitor here lose his thoughts too far among antiquarian dreams, and shadows of the past, for there are factory-bells close by. However large the discourse of his mind may be, let him never forget that there is a strong and important present in the social life around him. And wherever he sets his foot, in South Lancashire, he will now find that there are shuttles flying where once was the council chamber of a baron; and that the people of these days are drying warps in the "shooting-butts" and tilt-yards of the olden time!

The following information respecting the Byron family, Barons of Rochdale, copied from an article in the *Manchester Guardian*, by the eminent antiquarian contributor to that journal, will not be uninteresting to some people:—

The Byrons, of Clayton and Rochdale, Lancashire, and Newstead Abbey, Notts, are descended from Ralph de Buron, who, at the time of the Conquest, and of the Doomsday Survey, held divers manors in Notts and Derbyshire. Hugo de Buron, grandson of Ralph, and feudal Baron of Horsetan, retiring *temp.* Henry III. from secular affairs, professed himself a monk, and held the hermitage of Kirsale or Kersal, under the priory of Lenton. His son was Sir Roger de Buron. Robert de Byron, son of Sir Roger de Buron, in the John 1st [1199-1200], married Cecilia, daughter and heiress of Richard Clayton, of Clayton, and thus obtained the manor and estates of Clayton. Failsworth and the township of Droylsden were soon after added to their Lancashire estates. Their son, Robert de Byron, lord of Clayton, was witness to a grant of Plying Hay in this country, to the monks of Cockersand, for the souls of Henry II. and Richard I. And his son, John de Byron, who was seated at Clayton, 28th Edward I. [1299-30], was governor of York, and had all his lands in Rochdale, with his wife Joan, by gift of her father, Sir Baldwin Teutonicus, or Thies, or de Tyas, who was conservator of the peace in Lancashire, 10th Edward [1281-82]. Her first husband was Sir Robert Holland, secretary of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster. Their son was Sir John de Byron, knight, lord of Clayton, who was one of the witnesses to the charter granted to the burgesses of Manchester, by Thomas Grelle, lord of that manor, in 1301. The two first witnesses to that document were "Sirs John Byron, Richard Byron, knights." These were father and son. Sir John married Alice, cousin and heir of Robert Bonastre, of Hindley, in this county. Their son, Sir Richard, lord of Cadenay and Clifton, had grant of free warren in his demesne lands in Clayton, Butterworth, and Royton, on the 28th June, 1303; he served in parliament for Lincolnshire, and died before 21st Edward III. [1347-8]. His son was Sir James de Byron, who died before 24th Edward III. [1350-51]. His son and heir was Sir John de Byron, who was knighted by Edward III. at the siege of Calais [1346-7], and, dying without issue, was succeeded by his brother, Sir Richard, before 4th Richard II. [1380-81]. Sir Richard died in 1398, and was succeeded by his son, Sir John *le* Byron, who received knighthood before 3rd Henry V. [1415-16], and as one of the knights of the shire, 7th Henry VI [1428-9]. He married Margery, daughter of John Booth, of Barton. His eldest son, Richard le Byron, dying in his father's lifetime, and Richard's son, James, dying without issue, the

estate passed to Richard's brother, Sir Nicholas, of Clayton, who married Alice, daughter of Sir John Boteler, of Beausey or Bewsey, near Warrington. Their son and heir was Sir John, who was constable of Nottingham Castle, and Sheriff of Lancaster, in 1441 and 1442. Sir John fought in the Battle of Bosworth Field, on the side of Henry VII., and was knighted on the field. Dying without issue in 1488, he was succeeded by his brother (then 30), Sir Nicholas, Sheriff of Lancaster, in 1459, who was made Knight of the Bath in 1501, and died in January, 1503-4. This son and heir, Sir John Byron (the one named in the above document), was steward of the manors of Manchester and Rochdale, and, on the dissolution of the monasteries, he had a grant of the priory of Newstead, 28th May, 1540. From that time the family made Newstead their principal seat, instead of Clayton. This will explain, to some extent, the transfer of Clayton, in 1547, from this same Sir John Byron to John Arderon or Arderne. Either this Sir John or his son, of the same name, in the year 1560, inclosed 260 acres of land on Beurdsell Moor, near Rochdale. His three eldest sons dying without issue (and we may just note that Kuerden preserves a copy of claim, without date, of Nicholas, the eldest, to the serjeanty of the king's free court of Rochdale, and to have the execution of all attachments and distresses, and all other things which belong to the king's bailiff there), Sir John was succeeded by his youngest son, Sir John, whom Baines states to have been knighted in 1759—probably a transposition of the figures 1579. This Sir John, in the 30th Elizabeth [1596-7], styles himself "Farmer of the Manor of Rochdale," and makes an annual payment to the Crown, being a fee farm rent to the honour of Rochdale. In the 1st Charles I. [1625-6], the manor of Rochdale passed from the Byrons; but in 1638 it was reconveyed to them; and, though confiscated during the commonwealth, Richard, Lord Byron, held the manor in 1660. Sir John's eldest son, Sir Nicholas, distinguished himself in the wars in the Low Countries, and at the battle of Edgehill (23rd October, 1642). He was general of Cheshire and Shropshire. His younger brother, Sir John, was made K.B. at the coronation of James I. and a baronet in 1603. Owing to the failure of the elder line, this Sir John became ancestor of the Lords Byron. Sir Nicholas was succeeded by his son, Sir John, who was made K.B. at the coronation of Charles I.; was appointed by that king Lieutenant of the Tower, in 1642, contrary to the wish of parliament; commanded the body of reserve at Edgehill; and was created Lord Byron of Rochdale, 24th October, 1643. In consequence of his devotion to the royal cause (for he fought against Oliver Cromwell at the battle of Preston, in August, 1648), his manor of Rochdale was sequestered, and held for several years by Sir Thomas Alcock, who held courts there in 1654, two years after Lord Byron's death. So great was his lordship's royalist zeal, that he was one of the seven specially exempted from the clemency of the government in the "Act of Oblivion," passed by parliament on the execution of Charles I. Dying at Paris, in 1652, without issue, he was succeeded by his cousin, Richard (son of Sir John, the baronet just mentioned), who became second Lord Byron, and died 4th October, 1679, aged 74. He was succeeded by his eldest son, William, who died 13th November, 1695, and was succeeded by his fourth son, William, who died August 8th, 1736, and was succeeded by a younger son, William, fifth Lord Byron, born in November, 1722, killed William Chaworth, Esq., in a duel, in January, 1765, and died 19th May, 1798. He was succeeded by his great nephew, George Gordon, the poet, sixth Lord Byron, who was born 22nd January, 1788, and died at Missolonghi, in April, 1824. In 1823, he sold Newstead Abbey to James Dearden, Esq., of Rochdale; and in the same year, he sold the manor and estate of Rochdale to the same gentleman, by whose son and heir they are now possessed. The manorial rights of Rochdale are reputed (says Baines) to extend over 32,000 statute acres of land, with the privileges of court baron and court leet in all the townships of the parish, including that portion of Saddleworth which lies within the parish of Rochdale; but excepting such districts as Robert de Lacy gave to the abbots of Whalley, with right to inclose the same.

The article goes on to say that the manor of Rochdale was anciently held by the Ellands of Elland, and the Savilles, and that on the death of Sir Henry Saville, it appears to have merged in the possession of the Duchy of Lancaster; and Queen Elizabeth, in right of her duchy possessions, demised that manor

to Sir John Byron, by letters patent, dated May 12th, 27th year of her reign (1585), from Lady-day, 1585, to the end of thirty-one years.

The eye having now satisfied itself with what was notable in and about Milnrow, I took my way home, with a mind more at liberty to reflect on what I had seen. The history of Lancashire passed in review before me; especially its latest history. I saw the country that was once thick with trees that canopied herds of wild animals, and thinnest of people, now bare of trees, and thickest of population; the land which was of least account of any in the kingdom in the last century, now most sought after; and those rude elements which were looked upon as "the riddlings of creation," more productive of riches than all the Sacramento's gold, and ministers to a spirit which is destined to change the social aspect of Britain. I saw the spade sinking in old hunting grounds, and old parks now trampled by the fast-increasing press of new feet. The hard cold soil is now made to grow food for man and beast. Masses of stone and flag are shaken from their sleep in the beds of the hills, and dragged forth to build mills and houses with. Streams which have frolicked and sung in undisturbed limpidity thousands of years, are dammed up, and made to wash and scour, and generate steam. Fathoms below the feet of the traveller, the miner is painfully worming his way in labyrinthine tunnels; and the earth is belching coals at a thousand mouths. The region teems with coal, stone, and water, and a people able to subdue them all to their purposes. These elements quietly bide their time, century after century, till the grand plot is ripe, and the mysterious signal given. Anon, when a thoughtful barber sets certain wheels spinning, and a contemplative lad takes a fine hint from his mother's tea-kettle, these slumbering powers start into astonishing activity, like an army of warriors roused to battle by the trumpet. Cloth is woven for the world, and the world buys it, and wears it. Commerce shoots up from a poor pedlar with his pack on a mule, to a giant merchant, stepping from continent to continent, over the ocean, to make his bargains. Railways are invented, and the land is ribbed with iron, for iron messengers to run upon, through mountains and over valleys, on business commissions; the very lightning turns errand-boy. A great fusion of thought and sentiment springs up, and Old England is in hysterics about its ancient opinions. A new aristocracy rises from the prudent,

persevering working-people of the district, and threatens to push the old one from its stool. What is to be the upshot of it all? The senses are stunned by the din of toil, and the view obscured by the dust of bargain-making. But, through an opening in the clouds, hope's stars are shining still in the blue heaven that overspans us. Take heart, ye toiling millions! The spirits of your heroic forefathers are watching to see what sort of England you leave to your sons!

The Birthplace of Tim Bobbin.

CHAPTER I.

A merrier man,
Within the limits of becoming mirth,
I never spent an hour's talk withal:
His eye begets occasion for his wit:
For every object that the one doth catch,
The other turns to a mirth-moving jest:
Which his fair tongue (conceit's expositor)
Delivers in such apt and gracious words,
That aged ears play truant to his tales.
—LOVE'S LABOUR LOST.

THERE is a quiet tract of country on the eastern border of Lancashire, lying in a corner, formed by the junction of the rivers Mersey and Irwell, and having but little intercourse with those great towns of the county which boil with the industry of these days, a few miles off, to the north and eastward. It is the green selvedge of our toilful district, in that direction; and the winding waters of the Mersey lace its meadows, lengthwise, until that river joins the more soiled and sullen Irwell, on the northern boundary of the parish. In all the landscape there are no hills to break the view; and, considering the extent of land, trees are but sparsely scattered over it. It is singular, also, that the oak will not flourish in this particular spot; although there are some fine specimens of the other trees common to the English soil. But the country is generally fertile, and prettily undulated in some places; and it is a pleasant scene in hay-time, "when leaves are large and long," and the birds are singing with full-throated gladness in the green shade, while the dewy swathe is falling to the mower's stroke, in the sunlight of a June morning. Looking eastward, across the Mersey,

the park-like plains and rustling woods of Cheshire stretch away, in unbroken beauty, as far as the eye can see. Indeed, the whole of this secluded tract, upon the Lancashire side of the river, may be naturally reckoned part of that fruitful Cheshire district which has, not inappropriately, been called "the market-garden of Manchester." The parish of Flixton occupies nearly the whole of this border nook of Lancashire; and the scattered hamlet of Urmston, in this parish, lays claim to the honour of being the birthplace of our earliest and most popular native humourist, the celebrated John Collier, better known by his self-chosen name of "Tim Bobbin,"—

> A lad whose fame did resound
> Through every village and town around;
> For fun, for frolic, and for whim.

And, certainly, the hamlet of Urmston is a spot quite in keeping with all we know of the general character, and all we can imagine of the earliest training of a man who owed so much to nature, and who described the manners of the country folk of his day with such living truth, enriched with the quaint tinge of a humorous genius, which was his, and his only. Fortune, and his own liking, seem to have made him a constant dweller in the country. He was, by fits, fond of social company, and business led him into towns, occasionally; but whenever he visited towns, he seems to have always turned again towards the chimney-corner of his country home with an undying love, which fairly glows in every allusion he makes to his dwelling-place at the village of Milnrow, and even to the honest, uncouth hinds, who were his neighbours there; and whose portraits he has drawn for us, so inimitably, in his celebrated story of "Tummus and Mary." He was "a fellow of infinite jest; of most excellent fancy." May his soul rest "in the bosom of good old Abraham!"

Here, then, in green Urmston, John Collier is said to have been born; and the almost unrecorded days of his childhood were passed here. Even now, the scattered dwellers of the place are mostly employed in agriculture, and their language and customs savour more of three centuries ago than those which we are used to in manufacturing towns. From the cottage homes, and old-fashioned farmhouses, which are dropped over the landscape, like birds' nests, "each in its nook of leaves," generation after generation has come forth to wander through the same

grass-grown byeways, and brambly old lanes; to weave the same chequered web of simple joys and sorrows, and cares and toils; and to lie down at last in the same old churchyard, where the "rude forefathers of the hamlet" are sleeping together so quietly. It is a country well worth visiting by any lover of nature, for its own sake. Its natural features, however, are those common to English rural scenery in districts where there are no great elevations, nor anything like thick woodlands; and though such scenery is always pleasing to my mind, it was not on account of its natural charms, nor to see its ancient halls, with the interesting associations of past generations playing about them; nor the ivied porches of its picturesque farmhouses; nor to peep through the flower-shaded lattices of its cottage nests; nor even to scrape acquaintance with the old-fashioned people who live in them, that I first wandered out to Flixton; though there is more than one quaint soul down there that I would rather spend an hour with than with any two fiddlers in the county. Particularly "Owd Rondle," the market-gardener, who used to tell me the richest country tales imaginable. He had a dog, which "wur never quiet, but when it wur feightin." He was a man of cheerful temper, and clear judgment, mingled with a warm undercurrent of chuckling humour, which thawed away stiff manners in an instant. The last time I saw him, a friend of his was complaining of the gloom of the times, and saying that he thought England's sun had set. "Set;" said Rondle, "not it! But iv it wur set, we'd get a devilish good moon up! Dunnut be so ready to mout yor fithers afore th' time comes. Noather me nor England mun last for ever. But Owd Englan's yung yet, for oather peace or war, though quietness is th' best, an' th' chepest; if they'n let us be quiet, on a daycent fuuting. So, keep yor heart up; for th' shell shall be brokken; an' th' chicken shall come forth; an' it shall be a cock-chicken; an' a feighter, with a single kom!" But "Rondle" was not always in this humour. He could doff his cap and bells at will; and liked, what he called, "sarviceable talk," when any really serious matter was afoot. Yet, it was not to see curious "Old Rondle" that I first went down to Flixton. The district is so far out of the common "trod," as Lancashire people say, that I doubt whether I should ever have rambled far in that direction if it had not been for the oft-repeated assertion that Urmston, in Flixton, was the birthplace of John Collier. And it was a desire to see

the reputed place of his nativity, and to verify the fact, as far as I could, on the spot—since the honour has been claimed by more than one other place in Lancashire—that first led me out there.

In my next chapter, gentle reader, if thou art minded so far to do me pleasure, we will ramble down that way together: and, I doubt not, that in the course of our journey thou wilt hear or see something or other which may haply repay thee for the trouble of going so far out of thy way with me.

CHAPTER II.

By the crackling fire,
We'll hold our little snug, domestic court,
Plying the work with song and tale between.

It was on a cold forenoon, early in the month of April, that I set off to see Urmston, in Flixton. The sky was gloomy, and the air chill; but the cold was bracing, and the time convenient, so I went towards Oxford Road Station in a cheerful temper. Stretford is the nearest point on the line, and I took my ticket to that village. We left the huge manufactories, and the miserable chimney tops of "Little Ireland," down by the dirty Medlock; we ran over a web of dingy streets, swarming with dingy people; we flitted by the end of Deansgate (the Ratcliffe Highway of Manchester), and over the top of Knott Mill, the site of the Roman Station,—now covered with warehouses and other buildings connected with the Bridgewater Trust; we left the black, stagnant canal, coiled in the hollow, and stretching its dark length into the distance, like a slimy snake. We cleared the cotton mills, and dyeworks, and chemical manufactories of Cornbrook. Pomona Gardens, too, we left behind, with the irregular carpentry of its great picture sticking up raggedly in the dun air, like the charred relics of a burnt woodyard. These all passed in swift panorama, and the train stopped at Old Trafford, the site of the "Art Exhibition," just closed. Three years ago the inhabitants did not dream that this was to be the gathering-place of the grandest collection of works of art the world ever saw, and the scene of more bustle and pomp than was ever known on any spot in the north of England, before. The building was up, but not opened, and as we went

by we had a good view of the shapeless mass, and of many curious people tooting about the enclosure to see what was going on. Old Trafford takes its name from the Trafford family, or rather, I believe, gives its name to that family, whose ancient dwelling, Old Trafford Hall, stands in part of its once extensive gardens, near the railway. Baines says of this family, "The Traffords were settled here (at Trafford) at a period anterior to the Norman conquest, and ancient documents in possession of the family show that their property has descended to the present representative, not only by an uninterrupted line of male heirs, but without alienation, during the mutations in national faith, and the violence in civil commotions. Henry, the great-grandson of Ranulphus de Trafford, who resided at Trafford in the reign of Canute and Edward the Confessor, received lands from Helias de Pendlebury; in Chorlton, from Gospatrick de Chorlton; and in Stretford, from Hamo, the third baron of that name, of Dunham Massie; and from Pain of Ecborn (Ashburn) he had the whole of the lordship of Stretford." The whole of Stretford belongs to the Traffords still. "In the reign of Henry VI. Sir Edmund Trafford, of Trafford, assisted at the coronation of the king, and received the honour of Knight of the Bath on that occasion." A certain poet says truly—

> Though much the centuries take, and much bestow,
> Most through them all immutable remains;

but the mind sets out upon a curious journey when it starts from modern Manchester, with its industrialism and its political unions, its hearty workers and its wealthy traders, its charities and its poverties, its mechanics' institutions and its ignorance, its religions and its sins, and travels through the successive growths of change which have come over the life of man since the days of Canute (when Manchester must have been a rude little woodland town), speculating as it goes as to what is virtually changed, and what remains the same through the long lapse of time, linking the "then" and "there," with "now" and "here." But we are now fairly in the country, and the early grass is peeping out of the ground, making all the landscape look sweetly green. In a few minutes the whole distance had been run, and I heard the cry, "Out here for Stretford!" Leaving the station, I went to the top of the railway bridge, which carries the high road over the line. From that elevation I looked about me. It commands a good view of the village hard by, and of the country for miles

around. This great tract of meadows, gardens, and pasture land, was once a thick woodland, famous, in the Withington district, for its fine oak trees. In Flixton the oak was never found, except of stunted growth. A few miles to westward, the parks of Dunham and Tatton show how grand the old growth of native trees must have been on the Cheshire border; and in the north-east, the woods of Trafford make a dark shadow on the scene. And here at hand is the old village of Stretford, the property of the Traffords of Trafford; whose arms give name to the principal inn of the village, as well as to one or two others on the road from Manchester. The man in motley, with a flail in his hand, and the mottos, "Now, thus;" "Gripe Griffin; hold fast!" greet the traveller with a kind of grim historic salutation as he goes by. These are household phrases with the inhabitants, many of whom are descendants of the ancient tenantry of the family. Quiet Stretford! close to the Cheshire border; the first rural village after leaving that great machine-shop called Manchester. Depart from that city in almost any other direction, and you come upon a quick succession of the same manufacturing features you have left behind, divided, of course, by many a beautiful nook of country green. But somehow, though a man may feel proud of these industrial triumphs, yet, if he has a natural love of the country, he breathes all the more freely when he comes out in this direction, from the knowledge that he is entering upon a country of unmixed rural quietness and beauty, and that the tremendous bustle of manufacture is entirely behind him for the time. Stretford is an agricultural village, but there is a kind of manufacture which it excels in. Ormskirk is famous for its gingerbread; Bury for its "simblins," or "simnels;" Eccles for those spicy cakes, which "Owd Chum"—the delight of every country fair in these parts—used to sell at the "Rushbearings" of Lancashire; but the mission of Stretford is black puddings. And, certainly, a Stretford black pudding would not be despised even by a famishing Israelite, if he happened to value a dinner more than the ancient faith of his fathers. Fruit, flowers, green market-stuff, black puddings, and swine's flesh in general—these are the pride of the village. Roast pork, stuffed in a certain savoury way, is a favourite dish here. The village folks call it the "Stretford Goose;" and it is not a bad substitute for that pleasant bird, as I found. Stretford is nearly all in one street, by the side of the highway going into Cheshire.

It has grown very much in late years, but enow of its old features remain to give the place a quaint tone, and to show what it was fifty years ago, before Manchester merchants began to build mansions in the neighbourhood, and Manchester tradesmen began to go out there to lodge. There was once an old church in Stretford, of very simple architecture, built and endowed by the Trafford family. Nothing of it now remains but the graveyard, which is carefully enclosed. I looked through the rails into this weedy sanctuary of human decay. It had a still, neglected look. "The poor inhabitants below" had been gathering together there a long while, and their memories now floating down the stream of time, far away from the sympathies of the living, except in that honourable reverence for the dead, which had here enclosed their dust from unfeeling intrusion. It was useless for me to wonder who they were that lay there; how long they had been mouldering in company, or what manner of life they had led. Their simple annals had faded, or were fading away. The wind was playing with the grave-grass; the village life of Stretford was going on as blithe as ever round this quiet enclosure, and I walked forward. Even such is time—

> Who in the dark and silent grave,
> When we have wandered all our ways,
> Shuts up the story of our days.

The "curfew" has "tolled the knell of parting day" over the woods and fields around this village ever since the time of William the Conqueror. I had agreed to call upon a friend of mine here before going down to Flixton, so I walked a little way farther down the village, and then turning through a certain orchard, as directed, I came into a green lane beyond. There stood the house, on the opposite side of the lane, at the top of a gentle slope of garden, shaded with evergreens, among which rose up one remarkably fine variegated holly. The hedgerows were trim, and the cottage on the knoll, with its bright windows "winking through their screen of leaves," looked very sweet, still, and nest-like. And then the little garden—

> A garden faire, and in the corner set
> Ane harbour grene, with wandis long and small
> Railit about, and so with treis set
> Was all the place, and hawthorn hegeis knet,
> That lyf was non walking there forbye,
> That might within scarce ony wight aspye.

I stood still a minute, for the place was pleasant to look upon, and then opening the gate, and starting the birds from every

bush, went up through the little garden. I met with a hearty welcome, and mine host and myself soon had the snug tree-shaded parlour to ourselves. I was at home in a minute; but, as we chatted about the books on the shelves and the pictures on the walls, there came from somewhere in the house an aroma that "made my teeth shoot water." I was talking of books, but in my mind I was wondering what it was that sent forth such a goodly smell; for I was hungry. My friend either divined my thoughts, or else he was secretly affected in the same way, for he said, "We are going to have a 'Stretford Goose' to-day." Now, I was curious, and the smell was fine, and my appetite keen, and I was fain when the goose and its trimmings came in. When we fell to, I certainly was the hero of the attack, and the goose came down before our combined forces like a waste-ware-house in flames. It was a wholesome, bountiful English meal, "wi' no fancy wark abeawt it;" and since that April noontide I have always felt an inward respect for a "Stretford Goose."

When dinner was fairly over, I lost no time in starting for Flixton, which was only three miles off; with what some people call "a good road" to it. And it certainly is better than those terrible old roads of North Lancashire, of which Arthur Young writes with such graphic ferocity. "Reader," says he, "did'st thou ever go from Wigan to Preston? If not; don't. Go to the devil rather; for nothing can be so infernal as that road is." The hedges by the wayside were covered with little buds. The murky clouds had left the sky, and the day was fine. There was a wintry nip in the air, which was pleasant enough to me; but it gave the young grass and the thorn-buds a shrinking look, as if they had come out too soon to be comfortable. The ground was soft under foot, and I had to pick my way through the "slutch" now and then. There had been long and heavy rains, and I could see gleaming sheets of water left on the low-lying meadow lands on the Cheshire side of the river. But I was in no humour for grumbling, for the country was new to me, and I looked around with pleasure, though the land was rather bare and shrivelled,—like a fowl in the moult,—for it had hardly got rid of winter's bleakness, and had not fairly donned the new suit of spring green. But the birds seemed satisfied, for they chirruped blythely among the wind-beaten thorns, and hopped and played from bough to bough in the scant-leaved trees. If these feathered tremblers had weathered the hard winter, by the kindness of

Providence, and amidst this lingering chill, could hail the drawing near of spring with such glad content, why should I repine? By the way, that phrase, "the drawing near of spring," reminds me of the burden of an ancient May song, peculiar to the people of this district. In the villages hereabouts, they have an old custom of singing in the month of May; and companies of musicians and "May-singers" go from house to house among their neighbours, on April nights, to sing under their chamber windows this old song about "the drawing near unto the merry month of May." An old man, known in Stretford as a "May-singer," an "herb-gatherer," and a "Yule-singer," who gets a scanty living out of the customs of each season of the year as it comes, furnished me with a rough copy of the words and music of this old "May Song." In one verse of the song, each member of the sleeping family is addressed by name in succession,—

Then rise up, Sarah Brundrit, all in your gown of green;

and as each appears at the window, they are saluted with a "Merry May." Since the time of my visit I have been enabled, through the kindness of John Harland, Esq., F.S.A., to give this old May song, in complete shape, as it appears in his first volume of "Lancashire Ballads," recently published by Mr. Edwin Slater, of Manchester:—

All in this pleasant evening together come are we,
For the summer springs so fresh, green, and gay;
We'll tell you of a blossom that buds on every tree,
Drawing near unto the merry month of May.

Rise up the master of this house, put on your chain of gold,
For the summer springs so fresh, green, and gay;
We hope you're not offended, (with) your house we make so bold,
Drawing near unto the merry month of May.

Rise up the mistress of this house, with gold along (upon) your breast,
For the summer springs so fresh, green, and gay;
And if your body be asleep, I hope your soul's at rest,
Drawing near unto the merry month of May.

Rise up the children of this house, all in your rich attire
For the summer springs so fresh, green, and gay;
For every hair upon your head shines like the silver wire,
Drawing near unto the merry month of May.

God bless this house and harbour, your riches and your store,
For the summer springs so fresh, green, and gay;
We hope the Lord will prosper you, both now and evermore,
Drawing near unto the merry month of May.

So now we're going to leave you in peace and plenty here,
For the summer springs so fresh, green, and gay;
We shall not sing you May again until another year,—
For to draw you the cold winter away.

About a mile on the road, I came to a green dingle, called "Gamershaw." A large brick dwelling-house now occupies the spot; which was formerly shaded by spreading trees,—a flaysome nook, of which the country folk were afraid at night-time, as the haunt of a goblin, called "Gamershaw Boggart." Every rustle of the trees at Gamershaw was big with terror to them half a century ago. Even now, when "Gamershaw Boggart" has hardly a leaf to shelter its old haunt, the place is fearful after dark, to the superstitious people of Flixton parish. And yet there seems to be some change working in this respect, for when I asked a villager whether "Gamershaw Boggart" was ever seen now, he said, "Naw; we never see'n no boggarts neaw; nobbut when th' brade-fleigh's (bread-rack) empty!"

CHAPTER III.

I there wi' something did forgather,
That put me in an eerie swither.
—BURNS.

LEAVING "Gamershaw," I "sceawrt eendway," as Collier says. Here I had the advantage of an intelligent companion, with a rich store of local anecdote in him. He was not a man inclined to superstition: but he said he once had an adventure at this spot, which startled him. Walking by "Gamershaw," on a pitch-dark night, and thinking of anything but boggarts, he heard something in the black gloom behind, following his footsteps with a soft, unearthly trot, accompanied by an unmistakable rattle of chains. He stopt. It stopt. He went on; and the fearful sounds dogged him again, with malignant regularity. "Gamershaw Boggart, after all, and no mistake," thought he: and in spite of all reason, a cold sweat began to come over him. Just then the goblin made a fiendish dash by, and went helter-skelter down the middle of the road, trailing the horrible clang of chains behind it, with infernal glee; and then dived into the midnight beyond. To his relief, however, he bethought him that it was a large dog belonging to a farmer in the neighbourhood. The dog had got loose, and was thus making night hideous by unconsciously personifying "Gamershaw Boggart."

And now my companion and I whiled away the time from Gamershaw with a pleasant interchange of country anecdote. I have just room for one, which I remember hearing in some of my rambles among the moorland folk of my native district. It is a story of a poor hand-loom weaver, called "Thrum," trying to sell his dog "Snap" to a moorland farmer. I have put it in the form of a dialogue, that it may be the more understandable to the general reader. It runs thus:—

Thrum. Maister, dun yo want a nice bull-an-tarrier?

Farmer. A what?

Thrum. A bull-an-tarrier dog, wi' feet as white as snow! Brass wouldn't ha' parted me an' that dog, iv there hadn't bin sich ill deed for weyvers just neaw,—it wouldn't, for sure. For aw'd taen to th' dog, an' the dog had taen to me, very mich, for o' at it had nobbut thin pikein' sometimes. But poverty parts good friends neaw and then, maister.

Farmer. A bull-an-tarrier, saysto?

Thrum. Ay; an' th' smartest o'th breed at ever ran at a mon's heels! It's brother to that dog o' Lolloper's, at stoole a shoolder o' mutton, an' ran up a soof with it.

Farmer. Ay; is it one o' that family?

Thrum. It is for sure. They're prime steylers, o' on em.

Farmer. Has it a nick under its nose?

Thrum. A nick,—naw it hasn't. . . Houd; what mak ov a nick dun yo meeon?

Farmer. Has it a meawth?

Thrum. Ay; it's a grand meawth; an' a rook o'th prattiest teeth at ever wur pegged into a pair o' choles! A sharper, seawnder set o' dog-teeth never snapt at a ratton! Then, look at it e'en; they're as breet as th' north star, ov a frosty neet! An' feel at it nose; it's as cowd as iccles! That dog's some sarviceable yelth (health) abeawt it, maister.

Farmer. Aw'll tell tho what,—it looks hungry.

Thrum. Hungry! It's olez hungry! An' it'll heyt aught i'th world, fro a collop to a dur latch. . . Oh, ay; it's reet enough for that.

Farmer. Well, owd mon; aw've nought again thi dog, but that nick under it nose. To tell tho th' treawth, we may'n meawths here faster nor we may'n mheyt. Look at yon woman! Aw would e'en ha' tho to tay thi doo wheer they're noan as thick upo th' clod as here.

Thrum. Oh, aw see. . . Well, eawr Matty's just the very same; nobbut her nose has rayther a sharper poynt to't nor yor wife's. . . Yo see'n aw thought it wur time to sell th' dog, when aw had to ax owd Thunge to lend mo a bite ov his moufin whol aw'd deawn't my piece. But aw'll go fur on. So good day to yo. . . Come, Snap, owd lad; aw'll find thee a good shop, or else aw'll sweat.

Chatting about such things as these, we came up to a plain whitewashed hall-house, standing a little off the road, called "Newcroft." This was pointed out to me as the residence of a gentleman related to the famous "Whitworth doctors." The place looked neat and homely, and had orderly grounds and gardens about, but there was nothing remarkable in its general appearance which would have stopt me, but for the interesting fact just mentioned. It brought to my mind many a racy story connected with that worthy old family of country doctors, and their quaint independent way of life in the little moorland village of Whitworth, near "Fairies Chapel," the scene of one of those "Lancashire Traditions" which Mr. John Roby wrote about. I found afterwards that this "Newcroft" was, in old time, the homestead of the great Cheshire family of Warburton, of which family R. E. E. Warburton, Esq., of Arley Hall, is the present representative. I understand that the foundations of the old hall are incorporated with the present building. There are very few trees about the place now; and these afford neither shade to the house nor much ornament to the scene. The name of Warburton is still common about here, both among the living, and on the gravestones of Flixton churchyard. The saying, "Aw'll tear tho limb fro Warbu'ton," is common all over Lancashire as well as Cheshire. One side of its meaning is evident enough, but its allusions used to puzzle me. I find that it has its origin in the curiously-involved relations of the two Cheshire rectories of Lymm and Warburton, and in some futile effort which was once made to separate them. Written this way, "I'll tear tho limb (Lymm) fro Warbu'ton (Warburton)," the saying explains itself better. There is a ballad in Dr. Latham's work on "The English Language," in which the present "Squire ov Arley Ha'" is mentioned in a characteristic way. It is given in that work as a specimen of the Cheshire dialect. It certainly is the raciest modern ballad of its kind that I know of. The breeze of nature has played in the heart of the writer, whoever he be. Its

allusions and language have so much affinity with the Lancashire side of the water, that I think the reader will forgive me for introducing it, that he may judge of it for himself. The title is "Farmer Dobbin; or, a Day wi' the Cheshire Fox Dogs." Here it is; and I fancy that a man with any blood in his body will hunt as he reads it:—

Theer's slutch upo thi coat, mon, theer's blood upo thi chin,
It's welly toim for milkin, now where ever 'ast ee bin;
Oiv bin to see the gentlefolks o' Cheshire roid a run,
Owd wench! oiv bin a hunting, an oiv seen some rattling fun.

Th' owd mare was in the smithy when the huntsman he trots through,
Black Bill agate o' 'ammerin the last nail in her shoe:
The cuvver laid so wheam like, and so jovial fine the day,
Says I, "Owd mare, we'll tak a fling, an' see 'em go away."

When up, and oi'd got shut ov aw the hackney pads an' traps,
Orse dealers and orse jockey lads, and such loike swaggering chaps,
Then what a power o' gentlefolk did oi set eyes upon!
A-reining in their hunters, aw blood orses every one!

They'd aw got bookskin leathers on, a fitten 'em so toight,
As roind an plump as turmits be, an just about as whoite:
Their spurs were made o' silver, and their buttons made o' brass,
Their coats wur red as carrots, an their collars green as grass.

A varment looking gemman on a woiry tit I seed,
An' another close beside him sittin noble on his steed;
They ca' them both owd codgers, but as fresh as paint they look,
John Glegg, Esquoir, o' Withington, an bowd Sir Richard Brooke.

I seed Squoir Geffrey Shakerly, the best un o' that breed,
His smoiling face tould plainly how the sport wi' him agreed;
I seed the Arl o' Grosvenor, a loikely lad to roid,
Aw seed a soight worth aw the rest, his farrently young broid.

Sir Umferry de Trafford, an the Squoir ov Arley Haw
His pockets full o' rigmarole, a rhoimin' on 'em aw;
Two members for the cointy, both aloike ca'd Egerton,
Squoir Henry Brooks and Tummus Brooks, they'd aw green collars on.

Eh! what a mon be Dixon John, ov Astle Haw, Esquoir,
You wudna foind, an mezzur him, his marrow in the shoir!
Squoir Wilbraham o' the forest, death and danger he defois
When his coat he toightly buttened up, an shut up both his oies.

The Honerable Lazzles, who from forrin parts be cum,
An a chip of owd Lord Delamere, the Honerable Tum;
Squoir Fox an Booth and Worthington, Squoir Massey an Squoir Harne,
And many more big sportsmen, but their names I didna larn.

I seed that greet commander in the saddle, Captain Whoite,
An the pack as thrung'd about him was indeed a gradely soight;
The dogs look'd foine as Satin, an himsel look'd hard as nails,
An' he giv the swells a caution not to roid upo their tails.

Says he, "Yung men o' Manchester an Liverpoo cum near,
Oiv just a word, a warning word, to whisper in your ear;
When, starting from the cuvver soide, ye see bowd Reynard burst,
We canna 'ave no 'untin, if the gemmen go it first."

Tom Rance has got a single oie worth many another's two,
He held his cap abuv his yed to show he'd had a view; '
Tom's voice was loik th' owd raven's when he shriek'd out "Tallyho!"
For when the fox had seen Tom's feace he thought it time to go.

Eh moy! a pratty jingle then went ringing through the skoy,
First Victory, then Villager began the merry croy;
Then every maith was open, from the owd 'un to the pup,
An' aw the pack together took the swelling chorus up.

Eh moy! a pratty scouver then was kick'd up in the vale,
They skimm'd across the running brook, they topp'd the post an' rail,
They didna stop for razzur cop, but play'd at touch and go,
An' them as miss'd a footin there, lay doubled up below.

I seed the 'ounds a crossing Farmer Flareup's boundary loin,
Whose daughter plays the peany and drinks whoit sherry woin:
Gowd rings upon her fingers, and silk stockings on her feet;
Says I, "It won't do him no harm to roid across his wheat."

So, toightly houdin on by th' yed, I bits th' owd mare a whop,
Hoo plumps into the middle o' the wheatfield neck and crop;
An when hoo floinder'd out on it I catch'd another spin,
An, missis, that's the cagion o' the blood upo my chin.

I never oss'd another lep, but kept the lane, and then
In twenty minutes' toime about they turn'd toart me again;
The fox was foinly daggled, and the tits aw out o' breath,
When they kilt him in the open, an owd Dobbin seed the death.

Loik dangling of a babby, then the huntsman hove him up,
The dugs a-baying round him, whoil the gemman croid, "Whoo-up;"
Then clanc and quick, as doosome cauves lick fleetings from the pail,
They worried every inch on 'im except his yed and tail.

What's up wi' them rich gentlefolk an lords as wasna there?
There was noither Marquis Chumley, nor the Viscount Combermere;
Noither Legh, nor France o' Bostock, nor the Squoir o' Peckforton,
How cums it they can stop awhoam, such sport a goin on?

Now, missus, sin the markets be a doin moderate well,
Oiv welly made my mind up just to buy a nag mysel;
For to keep a farmer's spirits up gen things be gettin low,
Theer's nothin loik fox-hunting and a rattling "Tallyho!"

I think the reader will agree with me in saying that this characteristic song has much of the old expressive ballad simplicity and vigour about it. The county of Cheshire is rich in local song; and R. E. E. Warburton, Esq., mentioned in these verses as "the Squoir of Arley Haw"—

His pockets full o' rigmarole, a rhoimin' on 'em aw—

is the author of several fine hunting songs, in the dialect of that county; he is also the editor of a valuable and interesting volume of "Cheshire Songs."

CHAPTER IV.

In sunshine and in shade, in wet and fair,
Drooping or blithe of heart, as might befall:
My best companions now the driving winds,
And now the "trotting brooks" and whispering trees,
And now the music of my own sad steps,
With many a short-lived thought that passed between,
And disappeared.

—WORDSWORTH.

A SHORT walk from "Newcroft" brought me to a dip in the highway, at a spot where four roads meet in the hollow, a "four-lone-eends," as country folk call it. Such places had an awful interest for the simple hinds of Lancashire in old times; and, in remote parts of the county, the same feeling is strong yet with regard to them. In ancient days, robbers, and other malefactors, were sometimes buried at the ends of four cross roads, unhallowed by "bell, book, or candle." The old superstitions of the people, cherished by their manner of life, dwelling, as they did, in little seclusions, scattered over the country around, made these the meeting-places of witches, and all sorts of unholy things, of a weird nature. It is a common belief now, among the natives of the hills and solitary cloughs of Lancashire, that the best way of laying a ghost, or quieting any unearthly spirit whose restlessness troubles their lonely lives, is to sacrifice a cock to the goblin, and, with certain curious ceremonies, to bury the same deep in the earth at a "four-lone-eends," firmly pinned to the ground by a hedge-stake, driven through its body. The coldly-learned, "lost in a gloom of uninspired research," may sneer at these rustic superstitions; yet, surely, he was wiser who said that he would rather decline to the "traditionary sympathies of unlettered ignorance," than constantly see and hear

The repetitions wearisome of sense,
Where soul is dead, and feeling hath no place:
Where knowledge, ill begun in cold remark
On outward things, in formal inference ends

Near this place stands the handsome mansion of J. T. Hibbert, Esq., the president of the Mutual Improvement Society at Stretford, and a general benefactor to the neighbourhood in which he resides. He seems to have awakened that locality to the spirit of

modern improvement, and is making what was, comparatively, a desert nook before, now gradually smile around him. The people thereabouts say that "it wur quite a lost place afore he coom." We are now in the township of Urmston, though not in the exact spot where "Tim Bobbin" was born. As I stood in the hollow, looking round at the little cluster of dwellings, my friend pointed to a large, sleepy-looking old brick house, with a slip of greensward peeping through the paling in front, as the dwelling of William Shore, Esq., an eminent local musician, the author of that beautiful glee-arrangement of the music to Burns's matchless carousal song, "Willie brewed a peck o' maut," so much admired by all lovers of the concord of sweet sounds. And, certainly, if the musician had never done anything more than that exquisite gem of harmony, it would have added an interest to his dwelling-place. Who, that loved music, could go by such a spot without noticing it? Not I; for, as Wordsworth says of the pedlar who sometimes accompanied him in his mountain rambles, so, partly, may I say—

> Not a hamlet could we pass,
> Rarely a house, that did not yield to him
> Remembrances.

And yet I have a misgiving that the reader thinks I am lingering too tediously on the way; but, really, wherever one goes in England, apart from the natural beauty of the country, he finds the ground rich as "three-pile velvet" in all sorts of interesting things It is a curiously-illuminated miscellany of the finest kind; and, in spite of all it has gone through, thank Heaven, it is neither moth-eaten nor mildewed, nor in any way weakened by age. Its history is written all over the land in rich memorials, with a picturesque freshness which he that runs may read, if he only have feeling and thought to accompany him about the island, as he wades through the harvest of its historic annals, strewn with flowers of old romance, and tale, and hoary legend, and dewy with gems of native song.

Quitting the hamlet, we passed a mansion, half hidden by a brick wall, and thinly shaded by trees; a few straggling cottages; a neat little village school came next; one or two substantial English granges, surrounded by large outhouses, and clean, spacious yards, with glittering windows adorned with flowers, and a general air of comfort and repose about them; and then the hamlet dribbled away with a few more cottages, and we were

in the open country, upon the high level land; from whence we could look westward over the fields, below which "the Cheshire waters,"

> To their resting-place serene,
> Came fresh'ning and refreshing all the scene.

In the recently published "History of Preston and its Environs," by Mr. Charles Hardwick, the author of that admirable volume enters into an ingenious dissertation upon the derivation of the name of this river, and after suggesting that its name may be derived from "mere" and "sea," or sea-lake, says, "South of Manchester, at this day, the river is not known by many of the peasantry as the Mersey. It is called by them the 'Cheshire Waters.' The modern name appears to have been derived from the estuary, and not from the fresh-water stream." Mr. Hardwick's remark is equally true of the people dwelling here by that river, on the eastern side of Manchester. A few fields divide the high road from the water, and then slope down to its margin. From the road we could see the low, fertile expanse of Cheshire meadows and woods spread away to the edge of the horizon in one beautiful green level. When the river was swollen by long rains, the nearer part of the Cheshire side used to present the appearance of a great lake, before the embankment was thrown up to protect the fields from inundation. In past times, that rich tract must have been a vast marsh. But yonder stands Urmston Hall, upon a green bank, overlooking the river. As I drew nearer the building, I was more and more struck with its picturesque appearance, as seen from the high road, which goes by it, at about a hundred yards' distance. It is a fine specimen of the wood-and-plaster hall, once common in Lancashire, of which Hulme Hall was an older, and perhaps the richest example, so near Manchester. Urmston Hall is "of the age of Elizabeth, adorned by a gable, painted in lozenges and trefoils." Baines says, "According to Seacombe, Sir Thomas Lathom possessed the manor of Urmston, in this parish (Flixton), and at his death, 1 Edward III., he settled upon his natural son, Sir Oscatel, and his heirs, the manors of Irlam and Urmston, about the time when the Stanleys, whose heir had married Lady Elizabeth Lathom, assumed the crest of the Eagle and Child." He says further, "That according to other and higher authorities, the lands and lordship of Urmston have been the property of the Urmstons and Hydes in succession, from the time of King John to the

seventeenth century; and that the Urmstons resided at Urmston Hall until they removed to Westleigh, and were succeeded by the Hydes." The spacious carriage road still preserves its old proportion, though now rutted by the farmers' carts belonging to the present occupants of the place. A few tall relics of the fine trees which once surrounded the hall are still standing about, like faithful domestics clinging to the fallen fortunes of an ancient master.

And now, I begin to think of the special errand which has brought me to the place. There stands the old hall; and yonder is a row of four or five raw-looking, new brick cottages, such as one sees spring up at the edges of great factory towns, by whole streets at once, almost in a night—like Jonah's gourd. They hold nothing—they cost nothing—they are made out of nothing—they look nothing—and they come to nothing—as a satirical friend of mine says, who is satisfied with nothing. If it were not that one knows how very indifferently the common people were housed in those old days when the hall was in its glory, it really is enough to make one dissatisfied with the whole thing. With the exception of the hall and these cottages, the green country spreads out all around for some distance. When we came up to the row, my friend said that the endmost house stood on the spot, three years ago occupied by the old wood-and-plaster building in which "Tim Bobbin" was born, and in which his father, John Collier the elder, taught the children of Flixton parish, gathered from the rural folds in the distance. The house was gone, but, nevertheless, I must make what research I could, and to that end I referred to my note-book, and found that Baines says: "In a small house, opposite (Urmston Hall), bearing the name of 'Richard o' Jone's, was born John Collier, the renowned 'Tim Bobbin,' the provincial satirist of Lancashire, as appears from the following document:—'Baptisms in the parish church of Flixton in the year 1709—John, son of Mr. John Collier, of Urmston, baptised January the 8th.*—I hereby certify this to be a true extract of the parish register book at Flixton, as witness my hand, this 30th November, 1824.—(Signed) THOMAS HARPER, parish clerk.'" This was all clear and straightforward so far as it went, but I wanted to prove the thing for myself, as far as possible, on the spot. I thought it best to begin by inquiring at the nearest of these cottages, opposite Urmston Hall. Inside I heard the dismal rattle of hand-looms

* This date is according to the 'Old Style," which was then in use.

at work, and through the window I could see the web and the wooden beams of the machine, and a pale gingham weaver, swaying back and forward as he threw his shuttle to and fro. The door, which led into the other part of the cottage, was open, and a middle-aged woman, with a thin, patient face, was spinning there, on the wooden wheel still used in country places. This was the first indication I had noticed of any part of the population being employed in manufacture. I went to the open door, and asked the woman if this was not the spot where "Tim Bobbin" was born, expecting a ready and enthusiastic affirmative. She gazed at me for an instant, with a kind of vague curiosity; and, to my astonishment, said she really couldn't tell. She hardly seemed to know who "Tim Bobbin" was. Poor as the inmates were, everything inside spoke of industry and cleanliness, and simple, honest living. She called her husband from his looms, in the other part of the cottage; but his answer was nearly the same, except that he referred me to a person in the neighbourhood, who was formerly master of the school kept in this old house, called "Richard o' Jone's." I turned and left the spot with a feeling of disappointment, but with a stronger desire to know whether anything was known about the matter among the inhabitants of the locality. To this end, I and my friend rambled on towards Flixton, inquiring of high and low, and still nobody knew anything definite about it, though there was a general impression among them that he was born at the old cottage formerly standing opposite Urmston Hall; but they perpetually finished by referring to "Jockey Johnson," "Owd Cottrill, th' pavor," "Owd White-yed, th' saxton," and the parish schoolmaster before-mentioned. The parish clerk, too, might know something, they said. And here, as we wandered about in this way, a tall gentleman, a little past the middle age, dressed in black, came quietly up the road. My friend, to whom he was known, at once introduced me to the Rev. Mr. Gregory, the incumbent of Flixton, and told him my errand. The incumbent kindly invited me to look through the parish register, at his house, the first convenient afternoon I had to spare; which I did very soon after. Setting aside "Jockey Johnson," and "Owd Cottrill, th' pavor," and the other authorities of the hamlet so oft referred to, till a better opportunity, I thought that the schoolmaster, being a native man, and having lived long in the very house where "Tim" is said to have been born,

would probably feel some pride in his celebrated predecessor, and, perhaps, be a willing conservator of any tradition existing in the hamlet respecting him. His house was a little more than a mile off; and I started along the high road back to a point from whence an old lane leads out, eastward, to the schoolmaster's solitary cottage in the distant fields.

CHAPTER V.

In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.
—WORDSWORTH.

LEAVING the high-road at the place I had been told of, I went up an old lane, which soon led between a little fold of cottages. The first of these were old rude buildings of stone, with the roofs fallen in, and seemingly abandoned to decay. The others were of more modern appearance, and partly tenanted by hand-loom weavers. Through the open doors of one or two I saw that cheerful twinkle of humble comfort, which is, perhaps, more delightful to meet with in such lowly nooks than in prouder quarters; because it shows how much happiness may be drawn out of little means, by wholesome minds. If the doors had been closed, I could have guessed at the condition of the interior by the clean door-step and windows, and by the healthy pot-flowers peeping prettily through the panes. Folk who can make such places beautiful by simple cleanliness and native taste, are the unlettered gentry of nature, more blest in their low estate than they can understand, when they compare it with the glitter of the fuming world in the distance. Like the lark's nest, though near the ground, their homes are neat and sweet, out of humble materials, and blithe with the neighbourhood of nature. Some of these cottages were of duller aspect, though there was nothing of that dirty sickliness about them which is so common in the back quarters of city life. But I have noticed that, even in the lowest parts of great towns, now and then there comes a cottage all cleanliness and order, a sweet little household oasis amidst the wilderness of filth around; shining in the gloom, "like a good deed in a naughty world."

When I came to the end of the fold, I found that the lane

went forward in two directions; one right into the open green country, where I could see no dwellings at hand, the other winding back towards the village which I had left behind me, at the high-road side. An old woman was looking from the cottage door at the corner, and I asked her the way to the schoolmaster's house. Country folk are not always known in Lancashire by their real name, even on their own ground, and she had to consult somebody inside about the matter. In a minute or so, a voice from the cottage called out, "Does he belung to th' owd body, thinken yo?"—meaning the old body of Wesleyan Methodists. I said that I thought he did. "Oh, ay," replied the voice, "it'll be William, sure enough. . . . Yo mun go reet forrud up th' lone afore yo, till yo come'n to a heawse i'th fields,—an' that'll be it. It stons a bit off th' lone-side. . . . Yo'n ha' to pike yor gate, mind yo; for its nobbut a mak o' durty under-fuut." On I went, between the hedge-rows, slipping and stepping from pool to pool, down the miry cow-lane, for nearly half a mile, slutching myself up to the collar as I went; and there, about a stone's throw from the way-side, I saw the schoolmaster's low-built cottage standing in a bit of sweet garden in the middle of the wide green fields. Entering by a tiny wooden gate at the back, I went along a narrow garden walk, between little piles of rockery, and rows of shells, which ornamented the beds, till I came winding up to the door in front; which was shaded, if I remember right, by some kind of simple trellis-work. The wind was now still—everything was still, but the cheerful birds fluttering about, and filling the evening silence with their little melodies. The garden and the cottage looked sweet, and sleepily-beautiful. The windows blazed in the sunset, which was flooding all the level landscape with its departing splendour. I heard no stir inside, but knocking at the door, it was opened by a quiet middle-aged man, who asked me in. This was the schoolmaster himself; and, by the fireside sat a taller, older man; who was his brother. The only other inmate was a staid, elderly woman; whose dress, and mild countenance, was in perfect keeping with the order and peace of everything around. It was quite a sample of a quaint, comfortable English cottage interior. As I glanced about, I could fancy that many of the clean, little nick-nacks which I saw so carefully arranged, were the treasured heirlooms of old country housekeepers. Everything was in its right place, and cleaned up to its height. The house

was as serene, and the demeanour of the people as seemly and subdued as if it had been a little chapel; and the setting sun streaming through the front window, filled the cottage with a melting glory, which no magnificence of wealth could imitate. Catching, unconsciously, the spirit of the hour, my voice crept down nearer to the delicate stillness of the scene; and I whispered my questions to the two brothers, as if to speak at all was a desecration of that contemplative silence which seemed to steep everything around, like a delicious slumber, filled with holy dreams. We gradually got into conversation, and in the course of our talk I gathered from the two brothers that they had lived and kept school in the house where Baines says that Tim Bobbin was born. They said that, though there was a general belief that he was born in that house, yet they did not themselves possess anything which clearly proved the fact. And yet it might be quite true, they said; for they had often known artists come out there to sketch the building as his birthplace. There were other people in the parish who, they thought, might perhaps know more about the matter. They said that there were many curious Latin mottoes and armorial bearings painted on the walls and other parts of the school-house, which many people attributed to Tim Bobbin—but they were not quite sure that people were right in doing so. I agreed with the two brothers in this. There is little doubt that Tim was a fair Latin scholar in after life; I myself once possessed a pocket copy of Terence's "Comedies," which had undoubtedly belonged to him; and in the margin of which he had corrected the Latinity. But according to what is known of Tim's life elsewhere, he must have left the place of his birth very early in youth, probably with some migration of his father's family long before he could be able to deal with such matters. The brothers did not know whether these relics had been preserved or not when the house was taken down—they thought not. The house had been occupied by them and their fathers, as schoolmasters, for more than a hundred years gone by; but they really could not tell much more about the matter. They thought, however, that owd Tummus so and so would be likely to know something about it—or owd Hannah Wood. They were "two o'th owd'st folk i' Urmston; and that wur sayin' summat." Was I in the reporting line they wondered. . . . Well, it was no matter—but Owd Tummus lived about half a mile off, "o'er anent Cis Lone;" and I should be

sure to find him in. Thanking them for the information they had given me, I left the quiet trio in their quiet cottage, and came away. The evening was cold and clear, and the scattered birds were twittering out the last notes of their vespers in secluded solos, about the hedges. In the far east, the glimmering landscape was melting away; but the glory which hovered on the skirts of the sunken sun dazzled my eyes as I came down the old lane in the gloaming; and I was happy in my lonely walk, come of it whatever might.

I came up to the old man's house, just as the evening candles were beginning to twinkle through cottage windows by the way. He sat by the fire; a little man, thin and bent, but with a face that spoke an old age that was "frosty, but kindly." There were young people in the house; seemingly belonging to the farm. After some preliminary chat about weather and the like, I drew him in the direction of the subject I had come about; asking whether he had ever heard that Tim Bobbin was born in Urmston. He replied, "Well; aw have yerd it said so, aw think—but my memory houds nought neaw. . . Tim Bobbin, say'n yo? Aw like as aw could mind summat abeawt that,—aw *do*. . . . Owd Back'll know; if onybody does, he *will*. . . . He's a goodish age, is th' owd lad,—he *is;* an' fause with it,—*very*. . . Tim Bobbin! Tim Bobbin! . . Aw'st be eighty-three come th' time o'th year. Owd Back's a quarter younger. . . Aw've a pain taks me across here, neaw and then. We're made o' stuff at winnut last for ever. . . Ay, ay; we'n sin summat i' eawr time, has Owd Back an me,—we *han*. . . Dun yo know Kit o' Ottiwell's? Hoo lives at Davyhulme; ax hur; ax hur. Ho'll be likker to leeten yo abeawt this job nor me. Yo see'n aw connut piece things together neaw. If yo'd'n come'd fifty year sin, aw could ha' towd yo a tale, an' bowdly too,—aw could. But th' gam's up. The dule's getten th' porritch, an th' Lord's getten th' pon to scrape,—as usal." I was inquiring further about his friend "Owd Back," when he stopped me by saying, "Oh, there's Owd Hannah Wood; aw'd like to forgetten hur. Eh, that aw should forget Owd Hannah! Hoo lives by the hee-gate, as yo gwon to Stretford,—hoo *does*. What, are yo after property, or summat?" "No." "Whau then. . . Yo mun see Owd Hannah soon, yung mon; or yo'n ha' to look for her i' Flixton graveyort; an' aw deawt that would sarve yo'r turn but little.

. . . Folk donnut like so mich talk when they're getten theer. . . My feyther an' mother's theer, an' o' th' owd set;—aw'st be amoon 'em in a bit. Well, well; neighbour fare's no ill fare, as th' sayin' is." In this way the old man wandered on till I rose to go; when, turning to the old woman sitting near, he said, "Aw've just unbethought mo. William—— will be the very mon to ax abeawt this Tim Bobbin; an' so will their Sam. They liv't i'th heawse 'at he's speykin' on; an' so did their on-setters (ancestors) afore 'em. Beside they're a mak o' larnt folk. They're schoo maisters; an' so then." The old man did not know that these were the men I had just left. After resting a few minutes, he raised his head again, just before I came away, to tell me, as others had done, that "Jockey Johnson," an' "Cottril, th' pavor," were likely folk to sper on." In this way I wandered to and fro; meeting, in most cases, with little more than a glimmering remembrance of the thing, the dimness of which, seeing that few seemed to take any strong interest in the matter, I found afterwards was not difficult to account for. One old man said, as soon as the name was mentioned to him, "Let's see. Aw'm just thinkin'. . . Ay, ay; it's yon heawse opposite th' owd ho'. They'n bin built up again, lately. An' there wur writin' an' stuff upo' th' woles; but it took somebory with a deeal o' larnin' to understond it." When I called upon the parish-clerk, he told me that a few years ago a gentleman had called to make inquiry upon the same subject, and left instructions for everything in the register relating to Tim to be extracted for him, which was done; but he never called to get the manuscript, which was now lost or mislaid.

CHAPTER VI.

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death.

—SHAKSPERE.

I was a little disappointed at first to find that, wherever I went in the parish of Flixton, the inhabitants showed no strong interest in the quaint man of genius, whose early records I was in search of. But this is no wonder, when one considers what a thinly-

inhabited place this must have been at the beginning of Queen Anne's reign; and remembering, also, that nearly the whole of Tim's long life was spent elsewhere; first, as an apprentice to Dutch-loom weaving, which was looked upon as a rather genteel occupation in those days. But, as his friend and biographer, Richard Townley, Esq., of Bellfield Hall, says, "such a sedentary employment not at all agreeing with his volatile spirits and eccentric genius, he prevailed upon his master to release him from the remainder of his servitude. Though then very young, he soon commenced itinerant schoolmaster; going about the country from one small town to another, to teach reading, writing, and accounts; and generally having a night-school as well as a day one." Now, seeing that the theatre of these obscure and honourable struggles of Tim's youth was the town of Oldham, and the villages thereabouts, it is not surprising that the scattered inhabitants of the lonely nook where he was born should have few traditional remembrances of him, who left them when he was yet but a child. Tim's father was only forty years old, when he was overtaken by total blindness; and, this, necessarily, changed the plan he had formed of bringing up his son, our hero, to the Church, for "he had conceived a favourable opinion of his abilities." Now, this calamity did not befall the elder Mr. Collier during the time that he was schoolmaster at Urmston in Flixton: and everything shows that he was not a native of that place, but came from some other part to teach there; remaining only for a short time—during which Tim and his brother Nathan were born—and then moving away again, with his young family of nine children, to another quarter. What Baines says, on the authority of the inhabitants of Flixton, of the elder Collier never being a clergyman, may be true, so far as it relates to Urmston, of which place there never was a curate; nor was he in holy orders during his residence there; and yet he may have been so elsewhere. This supposition is strengthened by Tim's own words: "In the reign of Queen Anne I was a boy, and one of the nine children of a poor Lancashire curate, whose stipend never amounted to thirty pounds a year; and consequently the family must feel the iron teeth of penury with a witness. These, indeed, were sometimes blunted by the charitable disposition of the good rector (the Rev. Mr. H——, of W——n)." What an interesting glimpse this gives us of the home of Tim Bobbin's childhood! Now, it is just possible that the "good

rector" may have been the rector of Warrington of that time; whose name begins with the same initial letter. All things considered, I did not wonder that the family had left but little mark among the people of Flixton.

Seeing that so little was known by the inhabitants, I turned my thoughts towards the parish register, setting an afternoon apart for visiting the incumbent; who had invited me to look through it at his house. At the appointed time, I walked through the village of Flixton, a little way into the country beyond the village; and there, by the wayside, at the top of a little sloping lawn, partially screened by stunted trees and bushes, the "village preacher's modest mansion rose." The incumbent received me courteously, and entered kindly into my purpose. Ushering me into a little parlour at the front, he brought forth the two oldest register volumes of the parish from their hiding-place. The first thing which struck me was the difference in their condition. The oldest was perfectly sound, inside and outside. Its leaves were of vellum; and, with the exception of a slight discolouration in some places, they were as clear and perfect as ever they had been; and the entries in it were beautifully distinct, written in the old English character, and mostly in the Latin language. The change in the latter volume was very remarkable. Its binding was poor and shaky; and its leaves of the softest and most perishable writing paper, many of them quite loose in the book, and so worn, tattered, and crumbly, as to be scarcely touchable without damage. I could not help thinking that if any important question should arise a hundred years hence, the settling of which depended on such a mouldering record as this, is was just possible that decay might have forestalled the inquiry. After a careful examination of the register, I found the following entries relating to Tim's family, and, besides these, there is no mention of any other person of the name of Collier, for the space of half a century before, and a century after that date. First, under the head of "Births and Baptismes, in the year, 1706," appears "Nathan, ye son of John Collier, schoolmaster, borne May 17, baptised May 31." * Singularly, I found the same baptism entered a second time, three pages forward in the same year, with a slight variation, in the following manner:—"Baptised Nathan, the son of *Master* John Collier, schoolmaster, born May ye 18th." And then the last and only other mention

* Old style.

of the Colliers, is the register of the baptism of John, the renowned "Tim Bobbin," which is entered thus, among the baptisms of the year 1710: "John, son of Mr. John Collier, of Urmstone, baptised January the 6th." In Baines's "Lancashire," the baptism is given as occurring in 1709, which is a slight mistake. The origin of that mistake was evident to me, with the register before my eyes. The book seems to have been very irregularly kept in those days; and the baptisms in the year 1709 are entered under a headline, "Baptisms in the year 1709:" but at the end of the baptisms of that year, the list runs on into those of the following year, 1710, without any such headline to divide them; and this entry of Tim's baptism being one of the first, might easily be transcribed by a hasty observer, as belonging to the previous year. I thought there was something significant about the curious manner in which these three entries, relating to the Colliers, are made in the register. In the first entry of the baptism of Nathan, Tim's eldest brother, the father is called "John Collier, schoolmaster;" in the second entry of the same baptism, he is called "Master John Collier, schoolmaster;" and in the entry of Tim's baptism, three years later, the clerk, having written down the father's name as "John Collier of Urmstone," has, upon after-thought, made a caret between "the son of" and "John Collier of Urmstone," and carefully written "Mr." above it, making it read "Mr. John Collier, of Urmstone." This addition to the names of schoolmasters, or even of the wealthy inhabitants of the parish, occurs so very rarely in the register, that I could not help thinking this singular exception indicative of an honourable estimate of the character of Tim's father among his neighbours. Such was the result of my search; and it strengthens my conviction that old Mr. John Collier's family were not natives of Flixton, nor dwelt there long, but departed after a short residence to some other quarter, were the family were born, married, died, and buried; except the two before mentioned.

Whilst I was sitting in the incumbent's parlour, looking over these old books on that day, a little thing befell which pleased me, though the reader may think it trifling. The weather was very cold, and I happened to have on one of those red-and-black tartan wool shirts, which are comfortable wear enough in cold weather, though they look rather gaudy; and don't satisfy one's mind so well as a clean white shirt does. As I sat turning over

the leaves of these ancient records, in came the incumbent's son, a little, slim, intelligent boy, with large, thoughtful eyes. He watched me attentively for two or three minutes, and then, coming a little nearer, so as to get a good look at the wrists and front of my extraordinary under-gear, he called out, with unreserved astonishment, "Papa! he has got no shirt on!" The clergyman checked the lad instantly; though he could not help smiling at this little burst of frank, childish simplicity. The lad was evidently surprised to see me enjoy the thing so much.

I cannot dismiss this old parish register without noticing some other things in it which were interesting to me. And I can tell thee, reader, by the by, that there are worse ways of spending a few hours than in poring over such a record. How significantly the births, marriages, and deaths, tread upon one another's heels; as they do in the columns of newspapers! How solemnly the decaying pages represent the chequered pattern of our mortal estate! The exits and entrances of these ephemeral players in the drama of life continually interweave in the musty chronicle, as they do in the current of human action. There was a quaint tone running through the whole, which I could not well pass by. In the year 1688, the phrase, "buried in woollen only," first appears, and marks the date of an act for the encouragement of the woollen trade. This phrase is carefully added to every registration of burial, thenceforth for a considerable time; except in a few cases, where the phrase changes to "buried in sweet flowers only." What a world of mingled pathos and prettiness that phrase awakes in the mind! To a loving student of Shakspere, it might, not inaptly, call up that beautiful passage in Ophelia's burial scene:—

> *Laertes.* Lay her i' the earth;—
> And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
> May violets spring! . . . .
> *Queen.* Sweets to the sweet: Farewell!
> *(Scattering Flowers.)*

Sometimes an instance occurs where a burial takes place "in linen only." In this year of 1688, it is singular that there are only two marriages entered in the Flixton parish register. There was, perhaps, some particular reason for this at the time; but the fact will give the reader some idea of the smallness of the population in those days. From this time the phrase, "Sworn by so-and-so, before Justice so-and-so," is attached to some entries

of burial, as thus:—"Thomas, ye son of John Owen, of Carrington, buried in sweet floweres, attested by ye wife of George Twickins. Ye same day of burial, viz., 10th Oct. (1705), John, ye son of John Millatt, jun., of Carrington, an infant, buried in sweet floweres only." Then follows, "James Parren was not buried in any materiall contrary to a late act for Buryinge in Woollen.—Sworne by Mary Parren, before Justice Peter Egerton, Jan. 28th, 1705." The burials in the year 1706 are almost all in "sweet floweres only." This is the year when Nathan Collier was born, being the first mention of that family in the register. Three years after, his brother John (Tim Bobbin) was born; after which the Colliers disappear from the register altogether. Some of the burials occurring between 1720 and 1726, are remarkable for the manner of their entry, as, "Sarah, daughter of Schoolmaster Pony;" "James, Thomas Jaddock's father;" "John Swindell, taken out of ye river;" "Widow Peer's child, Aug. 5th;" and this is followed three days after by "Richd., son of Widow Peer's, Aug. 30th;" "Old Ralph Haslam, from Carrington;" "Old Henery Roile, from Stretford;" "Old Mrs. Starkey;" "Old John Groons;" "Moss's wife of Urmeston;" "Horox's child of Urmstone;" and "Hannah, daughter of one Dean, of Stretford." Then come these, in their proper order, entered in a clerkly hand:—"Thomas Willis, of Bleckly, in the county of Buckingham, Esq., and Mrs. Ann Hulme, Heiress of Davy Hulme, and of the lordship and manor of Urmston, were marry'd. Sept. 3rd, 1735;" and then "Anna Willis, the first daughter of Thomas Willis, Esq., born August the 11th, 1736, and baptised ye 14th Aug.—John Willis, clerk of Bleckley, in Bucks." I found the Christian name of Randal very common in this register. The names of Starkey, Holt, Rogers, and Egerton, ever accompanied by the title of gentleman; and for the rest, the names of Warburton, Taylor, Royle, Coupe, Darbishire, Shawcross, Gilbody, and Knight, form the staple of the list, with the addition of the Owens of Carrington Moss; who seem to have been a very prolific generation.

CHAPTER VII.

The evening comes, and brings the dew along,
The rodie welkin sheeneth to the eyne,
Around the alestake minstrels sing the song,
Young ivy round the door-post doth entwine;
I lay me down upon the grass, yet to my will,
Albeit all is fair, there lacketh something still.
—CHATTERTON.

THE people of southern England are apt to sneer at the enthusiasm with which Lancashire men speak of Tim Bobbin; and, if this imperfect sketch should fall into the hands of any such readers, it is not improbable that they may look upon the whole thing as a great fuss about next to nothing. One reason for this is, that, for the most part, they know next to nothing of the man—which is not much to be wondered at. But the greatest difficulty in their case is the remote character of the words and idioms used by Tim. To the majority of such readers, the dialogue of "Tummus and Mary" is little more than an unintelligible curiosity; and I believe, speaking generally, that it would be better understood by the natives of the metropolis if it had been written in French. The language in which the commanding genius of Chaucer wrought, five hundred years ago, and which was the common language of the London of those days, is, even in its most idiomatic part, very much the same as that used in all the country parts of Lancashire at this hour. But great changes have come round since the time of Chaucer; and though an Englishman is an Englishman in general characteristics, all the world over, there is as much difference now in the tone of manners and language in the North and South as there is between the tones of an organ and those of a piano. I have hardly ever met with a southern man able to comprehend the quaint, graphic wealth which hutches and chuckles with living fun and country humour, under the equally quaint garb of old language in which Tim clothes his story of "Tummus and Mary." But, on its first appearance, the people of his own district at once recognised an exquisite picture of themselves; and they hailed it with delight. He superintended several editions of his works during his lifetime—a time when the population of Lancashire was very scanty, and scattered over large, bleak spaces; and when publishing was a very different thing to what it is now

Since then, his principal story has continually grown in the estimation of scholars and students, as a valuable addition to the rich treasures of English philology, even apart from the genius which combined its humorous details with such masterly art, and finished and rounded it into the completeness of a literary dewdrop. That tale was calculated to command attention and awaken delight at once—and it will long be cherished with pride, by Lancashire men at least, as an exceedingly natural "glimpse of auld lang syne." But those who wish to understand the force of Tim's character, must look to his letters, and other prose fragments, such as "Truth in a Mask." These chiefly reveal the sterling excellence of the man. He was a clear-sighted, daring, independent politician—one of the strong old pioneers of human freedom in these parts. He had a curious audience in that secluded corner of Lancashire where he lived—in those days—a people who had worn their political shackles so long that they almost looked upon them as ornaments.

But *Tim* kent what was fu brawly;

and he was continually blurting out some startling truth or another, in vigorous, unmistakable English; and he gloried in the then disreputable and dangerous epithet of "Reforming John." This, too, in the teeth of patrons and friends whose political tendencies were in an entirely opposite direction. Let any man turn to the letter he writes to his friend, the Rev. Mr. Heap, of Dorking, who had desired him to "spare the levitical order," and then say whether there was any shadow of sycophancy in the soul of John Collier. Under the correction of magnifying the matter through the medium of one's native likings then, I will venture to declare a feeling akin to veneration for the spot where he was born; and I know that it is shared by the men of his native county, generally, even by those who find themselves at a difficult distance from his quaint tone of thought and language—for it takes a man thoroughly soaked with the Lancashire soil to appreciate him thoroughly. But, apart from all local inclinings, men of thought and feeling will ever welcome any spark of genuine creative fire, which glows with such genial human sympathies, and such an honourable sense of justice as John Collier evinces, however humble it may be in comparison with the achievements of those mighty spirits who have made the literature of our sea-girt island glorious in the earth. The waters of the

little mountain stream, singing its lone, low song, as it struggles through its rocky channel, are dear and beautiful, and useful to that rugged solitude, as is the great ocean to the shores on which its surges play. Nay, what is that ocean, but the gathered chorus of these lonely waters, in which the individual voice is lost in one grand combination of varied tones. With this imperfect notice, I will, at present, leave our old local favourite; and just take another glance at Flixton, before I bid adieu to his birthplace.

The reader may remember that, on the day of my first visit to John Collier's birthplace, I lounged some time about the hamlet of Urmston, conversing with the inhabitants. Leaving that spot, I rambled leisurely along the high road to Flixton, hob-nobbing, and inquiring among different sorts of people, about him, whenever opportunity offered. When I drew near to Shaw Hall, I had traversed a considerable part of the length of the parish, which is only four miles, at most, by about two in breadth. There is nothing like a hill to be seen; but as one wanders on, the country rises and falls, in gentle undulations. Now and then, a pool of water gleamed afar off in the green fields, or, close by the road, rippled into wavelets by the keen wind, which came down steadily from the north that day, whistling shrill cadences among the starved thorns. I cannot give a better idea of the character of the soil than by borrowing the words of Baines, who says: "Much of the land in the parish of Flixton is arable, probably to the amount of nine-tenths of the whole. The farms are comparatively large, and the soil is in general a rich black, sandy, vegetable loam, producing corn, fruit, and potatoes in abundance." I believe the land is now in better cultivation than when these words were written. Shaw Hall is an important place in the history of Flixton. The lords of the land dwelt there in old times. At the time of my visit it was occupied, as a boarding-school, by Mr. James M'Dougall, who was kind enough to show me through the interior when I called there in my ramble. Baines says of Shaw Hall: "It is a venerable mansion, of the age of James I., with gables and wooden parapets on the S. W. and N. sides. The roof has a profusion of chimneys, and a cupola in the centre. In one of the apartments is a painting covering the principal part of the ceiling, which represents the family of Darius kneeling in supplication before Alexander the Great. This picture, though two

hundred years old, is in fine preservation, and the faces and figures indicate the hand of a master. There are some smaller paintings and tapestry in the rooms, on one of which is represented a Persian chief at parley with Alexander, and, afterwards, submitting to the conqueror. Stained glass in the windows exhibit the arms of Asshawe and Egerton, successive lords of Flixton. . . Adjoining the ample gardens and filbert grove was once a moat, which has partly disappeared. Shaw Hall is now used as a boarding-school, a purpose to which, by its situation, it seems well adapted." I cannot leave this place without mentioning, that the, then, tenant of the hall was a poet of no mean promise, who has contributed an interesting volume of poems and songs to the literature of this district. From the high road, a little beyond the hall, the most prominent and pleasing object in the landscape is the old parish church of Flixton, standing in its still more ancient graveyard, upon the brow of a green knoll, about an arrow's flight off; with the village of Flixton clustered behind it. At the foot of that green knoll, to the westward, where all the country beyond is one unbroken green,

> The river glideth by the hamlet old.

The ground occupied by the church seemed to me the highest in the landscape; and the venerable fane stands there, looking round upon the quiet parish like a mother watching her children at play, and waiting till they come home, tired, to lie down and sleep with the rest. It was getting late in the evening when I sauntered about the churchyard, looking over the gravestones of Warburtons, Taylors, Cowpes, Gilbodys, Egertons, and Owens of Carrington. Among the rest, I found the following well-known epitaph, upon William Oldfield of Stretford, smith:—

> My anvil and my hammer lie declined,
> My bellows have quite lost their wind;
> My coals are done, my debt is paid,
> My vices in the dust are laid.

This epitaph, which appears here in such an imperfect shape, is commonly attributed to Tim. In Rochdale parish churchyard, it appears in a much completer form on the gravestone of a blacksmith, who lived in Tim's time.

I rambled about the old village a while in the dusk. Now and then a villager lounged along in the direction of the inn, near the church; where I could hear several boisterous country fellows

talking together in high glee, while one of them sang snatches of an old ballad, called the "Golden Glove:"—

> Coat, waistcoat, and breeches she then did put on,
> And a-hunting she went with her dog and gun;
> She hunted all around where the farmer did dwell,
> Because in her heart she did love him full well.

At length the horses were put to, and we got fairly upon the road, which took us back in another direction, round by Davy Hulme, the seat of the Norreys family. Immediately after clearing the village, Flixton House was pointed out to me; "a plain family mansion, with extensive grounds and gardens." The wind was cold, and the shades of night gathered fast around; and before we quitted Flixton parish, the birthplace of Tim Bobbin had faded from my view. I felt disappointed in finding that the place of his nativity yielded so little reminiscence of our worthy old local humorist; the simple reason for which is, that very little is known of him there. But there was compensating pleasure to me in meeting with so many interesting things there which I did not go in search of.

Ramble from Rochdale to the Top of Blackstone Edge.

> And so by many winding nooks he strays,
> With willing sport.
>
> —SHAKSPERE.

WELL may Englishmen cherish the memory of their forefathers, and love their native land. It has risen to its present power among the nations of the world through the efforts of many generations of heroic people; and the firmament of its biography is illumined by stars of the first magnitude. What we know of its history previous to the conquest by the Romans, is clouded by conjecture and romance; but we have sufficient evidence to show that, even then, this gem, "set in the silver sea," was known in distant regions of the earth, for its natural riches; and was inhabited by a brave and ingenious race of people. During the last two thousand years, the masters of the world have been fighting to win it, or to keep it. The woad-stained British savage, ardent, imaginative, and brave, roved through its woods and marshes, hunting the wild beasts of the island. He sometimes herded cattle, but was little given to tillage. He sold tin to the Phœnicians, and knew something about smelting iron ore, and working it into such shapes as were useful in a life of wild insecurity and warfare, such as his. In the slim coracle, he roamed the island's waters; and scoured its plains in battle, in his scythed car, a terror to the boldest foe. He worshipped, too, in an awful way, in sombre old woods, and colossal Stonehenges, under the

blue, o'er-arching sky. On lone wastes, and moorland hills, we still have the relics of these ancient temples, frowning at time, and seeming to say, as they look on nature's ever-returning green,—in the words of their old Druids—

Everything comes out of the ground but the dead.

But destiny had other things in store for these islands. The legions of imperial Rome came down upon the wild Celt, who retired, fiercely contending, to the mountain fastnesses of the north and west. Four hundred years the Roman wrought and ruled in Britain; and he left the broad red mark of his way of living stamped upon the face of the country, and upon its institutions, when his empire declined. The steadfast Saxon followed,—"stubborn, taciturn, sulky, indomitable, rock-made,"—a farmer and a fighter; a man of sense, and spirit, and integrity; an industrious man, and a home-bird. The Saxon never loosed his hold; even though his wild Scandinavian kinsmen, the sea-kings, and jarls of the north, came rushing to battle, with their piratical multitudes, tossing their swords into the air, and singing heroic ballads, as they slew their foemen, under the banner of the Black Raven. Then came the military Norman,—a northern pirate, trained in France to the art of war,—led on by the bold Duke William, who landed his warriors at Pevensey, and burnt the fleet that brought them to the shore, in order to bind his soldiers to the necessity of victory or death. Duke William conquered, and Harold, the Saxon, fell at Hastings, with an arrow in his brain. Each of these races has left its peculiarities stamped upon the institutions of the country; but most enduring of all,—the Saxon. And now, the labours of twenty centuries of valiant men, in peace and war, have achieved a matchless power, and freedom for us, and have bestrewn the face of the land with "the charms which follow long history." The country of Caractacus and Boadicea, where Alfred ruled, and Shakspere and Milton sang, will henceforth always be interesting to men of intelligent minds, wherever they were born. It is pleasant, also, to the eye, as it is instructive to the mind. Its history is written all over the soil, not only in strong evidences of its present genius and power, but in thousands of relics of its ancient fame and characteristics. In a letter, written by Lord Jeffrey, to his sister-in-law, an American lady, respecting what Old England is like, and in what it differs

most from America, he says: "It differs mostly, I think, in the visible memorials of antiquity with which it is overspread; the superior beauty of its verdure, and the more tasteful and happy state and distribution of its woods. Everything around you here is historical, and leads to romantic or interesting recollections. Gray-grown church towers, cathedrals, ruined abbeys, castles of all sizes and descriptions, in all stages of decay, from those that are inhabited, to those in whose moats ancient trees are growing, and ivy mantling over their mouldering fragments; . . and massive stone bridges over lazy waters; and churches that look as old as Christianity; and beautiful groups of branchy trees; and a verdure like nothing else in the universe; and all the cottages and lawns fragrant with sweet briar and violets, and glowing with purple lilacs and white elders; and antique villages scattering round wide bright greens; with old trees and ponds, and a massive pair of oaken stocks preserved from the days of Alfred. With you everything is new, and glaring, and angular, and withal rather frail, slight, and perishable; nothing soft, and mellow, and venerable, or that looks as if it would ever become so." This charming picture is almost entirely compounded from the most interesting features of the rural and antique: and is, therefore, more applicable to those agricultural parts of England which have been little changed by the events of its modern history, than to those districts which have been so changed by the peaceful revolutions of manufacture in these days. But, even in the manufacturing districts, where forests of chimneys rear their tall shafts, upon ground once covered with the woodland shade, or sparsely dotted with quaint hamlets,—the venerable monuments of old English life peep out in a beautiful way, among crowding evidences of modern power and population. And the influences which have so greatly changed the appearance of the country there, have not passed over the people without effect. Wherever the genius of commerce may be leading us to, there is no doubt that the old controls of feudalism are breaking up; and in the new state of things the people of South Lancashire have found greater liberty to improve their individual qualities and conditions; fairer chances of increasing their might and asserting their rights; greater power to examine and understand all questions which come before them, and to estimate and influence their rulers, than they had under the unreasoning domination which is passing away.

They are not a people inclined to anarchy. They love order as well as freedom, and they love freedom for the sake of having order established upon just principles.

The course of events during the last fifty years has been steadily upheaving the people of South Lancashire out of the thraldom of those orders which have long striven to conserve such things as tended to their own aggrandisement, at the expense of the rights of others. But even that part of the aristocracy of England which has not yet so far cast the slough of its hereditary prejudices as to see that the days are gone which nurtured such ascendancies, at least perceives that, in the manufacturing districts, it now walks in a world where few are disposed to accept its assumption of superiority, without inquiring into the nature of it. When a people who aspire to independence, begin to know how to get it, and how to use it wisely, the methods of rule that were made for slaves, will no longer answer their purpose; the pride of little minds in great places, begins to canker them, and they must give them the wall now and then, and look somewhere else for foot-lickers. The aristocracy of England are not all of them overwhelmed by the dignity of their "ancient descent." There are naturally-noble men among them, who can discern between living truth and dead tradition; men who do not think that the possession of a landed estate entitles its owner to extraordinary rights of domination over his acreless neighbours; or that, on that account alone, the rest of the world should fall down and worship at the feet of an ordinary person, more remarkable for an incomprehensible way of deporting himself, than for being a better man than his neighbours.

Through the streets of South Lancashire towns still, occasionally, roll the escutcheoned equipages of those exclusive families, who turn up the nose at the "lower orders;" and cherish a dim remembrance of the "good old times" when these lurdanes wore the collars of their ancestors upon the neck. To my thinking, the very carriage has a sort of lonely, unowned and unowning look, and never seems at home till it gets back to the coach-house; for the troops of factory lads, and other hard-working rabble, clatter merrily about the streets, looking villainously unconscious of anything particularly august in the nature of the show which is going by. On the driving-box sits a man with a beefy face, and a comically-subdued way of holding

his countenance, grand over all with "horse-gowd," and gilt buttons, elaborate with heraldic device. Another such person, with silky calves, and a "smoke-jack" upon his hat, and breeches of plush, stands on the platform behind. It is all no use. There are corners of England where such a sight is still enough to throw a whole village into fits; but, in the manufacturing towns, a travelling instalment of Wombwell's menagerie, with the portrait of a cub rhinoceros in front, would create more stir. Inside the carriage there reclines,—chewing the cud of unacknowledged pride,—one of that rare brood of dignitaries, a man with "ancestors," who plumes himself upon the distinguished privilege of being the son of somebody or another, who was the son of somebody else, and so on;—till it gets to some burglarious person, who, in company with several others of the same kidney, once pillaged an old estate, robbed a church, and did many other such deeds, in places where the law was too weak to protect the weak; and there is an eternal blazon of armorial fuss kept up in celebration of it, on the family shield. But, admitting that these things were in keeping with the spirit and necessities of the time, and with "the right of conquest," and such like, why should their descendants take to themselves airs on that account, and consider themselves the supreme "somebodies" of the land, for such worn-out reasons? Let any landlord who still tunes his pride according to the feudal gamut of his forefathers, acquaint himself with the tone of popular feeling in the manufacturing districts. Let "John" lower the steps, and with earth-directed eyes hold the carriage door, whilst our son of a hundred fathers walks forth into the streets of a manufacturing town, to try the magic of his ancient name among the workmen as they hurry to dinner. Where are the hat-touchers gone? If he be a landlord, with nothing better than tracts of earth to recommend him, the mechanical rabble jostle him as if he was "only a pauper whom nobody owns," or some wandering cow-jobber. He goes worshipless on his way, unless he happens to meet with one of the servants from the hall, or his butcher, or the parish clerk, or the man who rings the eight o'clock bell, and they treat him to a bend sinister. As to the pride of "ancient descent," what does it mean, apart from the renown of noble deeds? The poor folk in Lancashire cherish an old superstition that "we're o' somebory's childer,"—which would be

found very near the truth, if fairly looked into. And if Collop the cotton weaver's genealogy was correctly traced, it would probably run back to the year "one;" or, as he expresses it himself, to the time "when Adam wur a lad." Everything has its day. In some parts of Lancashire, the rattle of the railway train, and the bustle of traffic and labour, have drowned the tones of the hunting horn, and the chiming cry of the harriers. But whatever succeeds the decay of feudalism, the architectural relics of Old English life in Lancashire will always be interesting, and venerable as the head of a fine old man, on whose brow "the snow-fall of time" has long been stealing. May no ruder hand than the hand of time destroy these eloquent footprints of old thought which remain among us! Some men are like Burns's mouse,—the present only touches them; but any man who has the slightest title to the name of a creature of "large discourse," will be willing, now and then, to look contemplatively over his shoulder, into the grass-grown aisles of the past.

It was in that pleasant season of the year when fresh buds begin to shoot from the thorn: when the daisy and the little celandine, and the early primrose, peep from the ground, that I began to plot for another stroll through my native vale of the Roch, up to the top of "Blackstone Edge." Those mountain wastes are familiar to me. When I was a child, they rose up constantly in sight, with a silent, majestic look. The sun came from behind them in a morning, pouring its flood of splendour upon the busy valley, the winding river, and its little tributaries. I imbibed a strong attachment to those hills; and oft as opportunity would allow, I rushed towards them; for they were kindly and congenial to my mind. And now, in the crowded city, when I think of them and of the country they look down upon, it stirs within me a

> Wide sea that one continuous murmur breaks
> Along the pebbled shore of memory.

But at this particular time, an additional motive enticed me to my old wandering ground. The whole of the road leading to it was lined with interesting places, and associations. But, among the railways, and manifold other ways and means of travel, which now cover the country with an irregular net-work, I found, on looking over a recent map, a solitary line, running in short, broken distances; and, on the approach

of towns and habited spots, diving under, like a mole or an otter. It looked like a broken thread, here and there, in the mazy web of the map, and it was accompanied by the words "Roman Road," which had a little interest for me. I know there are people who would sneer at the idea of any importance being attached to an impracticable, out-of-the-way road, nearly two thousand years old, and leading to nowhere in particular, except, like the ways of the wicked, into all sorts of sloughs and difficulties. With them, one passable macadamised way, on which a cart could go to market, is worth all the ruined Watling-streets in Britain. And they are right, so far as their wisdom goes. The present generation must be served with market stuff, come what may of our museums. But still, everything in the world is full of manifold services to man, who is himself full of manifold needs. And thought can leave the telegraphic message behind, panting for breath upon the railway wires. The whole is either "cupboard for food," or "cabinet of pleasure;" therefore, let the hungry soul look round upon its estate and turn the universe to nutriment, if it can; for

> There's not a breath
> Will mingle kindly with the meadow air,
> Till it has panted round, and stolen a share
> Of passion from the heart.

And though the moorland pack-horse and the rambling besom-maker stumble and get entangled in grass, and sloughs, and matted brushwood, upon deserted roads, still that nimble Mercury, Thought, can flit over the silent waste, side by side with the shades of those formidable soldiers who have now slept nearly two thousand years in the cold ground.

It has not been my lot to see many of the vestiges of Roman life in Britain; yet, whatever the historians say about them has had interest for me; especially when it related to the connection of the Romans with my native district; for, in addition to its growing modern interest, I eagerly seized every fact of historical association calculated to enrich the vesture in which my mind had long been enrobing the place. I had read of the Roman station at Littleborough; of the Roman road in the neighbourhood; of interesting ancient relics, Roman and other, discovered thereabouts; and other matter of the like nature. My walks had been wide and frequent in the country about Rochdale; and many a time have I lingered and wondered at Littleborough, near the spot where history says that the Romans

encamped themselves, at the foot of Blackstone Edge, at the entrance of what would, then, be the impassable hills, and woody glens, and swampy bottoms of the Todmorden district. Yet I have never met with any visible remnants of such historical antiquities of the locality; and though, when wandering about the high moors in that quarter, I have more than once crossed the track of the Roman road up there, and noticed a general peculiarity of feature about the place, I little thought that I was floundering, through moss and heather, upon one of these famous old highways. I endeavoured to hold the bit upon my own eagerness; and read of these things with a reservation of credence, lest I should delude myself into receiving the invention of a brain mad with ancientry for a genuine relic of the eld. But one day, early in the year, happening to call upon a young friend of mine, in Rochdale, whose tastes are a little congenial to my own, we talked of a stroll towards the hills; and he again showed me the line of the Roman road, on Blackstone Edge, marked in the recent Ordnance map. We then went forth, bare-headed, into the yard of his father's house, at Wardleworth Brow, from whence the view of the hills, on the east, is fine. The air was clear, and the sunshine so favourably subdued, that the objects and tints of the landscape were uncommonly distinct. He pointed to a regular stripe of land, of greener hue than the rest of the moorland, rising up the dark side of Blackstone Edge. The green stripe was the line of the Roman road. He had lately visited it, and traced its uniform width for miles, and the peculiarities of its pavement of native sandstone, overgrown with a thick tanglement of moss, and heather, and moorland lichens. He was an old acquaintance, of known integrity, and sound judgment, and, withal, more addicted to figures of arithmetic than figures of speech; so, upon his testimony, I resolved that I would bring my unstable faith to the ordeal of ocular proof, that I might, at once, draft it out of the region of doubt, or sweep it from the chambers of my brain, like a festoonery of cobwebs from a neglected corner. The prospect of another visit to the scenery of the "Edge," another snuff of the mountain air, and a little more talk with the old-world folk in the villages upon the road thither, rose up pleasantly in my mind, and the purpose took the shape of action about St. Valentine's tide.

Having arranged to be called up at five on the morning of my

intended trip, I jumped out of bed when the knock came to my chamber-door, dressed, and started forth to catch the first train from Manchester. The streets were silent and still, except where one or two "early birds" of the city had gathered round a "saloop" stall; or a solitary policeman kept the lounging tenor of his way along the pavement; and here and there a brisk straggler, with a pipe in his mouth, his echoing steps contrasting strangely with the sleeping city's morning stillness. The day was ushered in with gusts of wind and rain, and, when I got to the station, both my coat and my expectations were a little damped by the weather. But, by the time the train reached Rochdale, the sky had cleared up, and the breeze had sunk down to a whisper, just cool enough to make the sunshine pleasant. The birds were twittering about, and drops of rain twinkled on the hedges and tufts of grass in the fields; where spring was quietly spreading out her green mantle again. I wished to have as wide a ramble at the farther end as time would allow; and, as moor-tramping is about the most laborious foot exercise that mortal man can bend his instep to, except running through a ploughed field, in iron-plated clogs,—an ordeal which Lancashire trainers sometimes put their foot-racers through,—it was considered advisable to hire a conveyance. We could go further, stop longer, and return at ease, when we liked, after we had tired ourselves to our heart's content upon the moors. I went down to the Reed Inn, for a vehicle. Mine host came out to the top of the steps which lead down into the stable-yard, and, leaning over the railings, called his principal ostler from the room below. That functionary was a broad-set, short-necked man, with a comely face, and a staid, laconic look. He told us, with Spartan brevity, that there had been a run upon gigs, but he could find us a "Whitechapel," and "Grey Bobby." "Grey Bobby" and the "Whitechapel" were agreed to at once, and in ten minutes I was driving up Yorkshire-street, to pick up my friends at Wardleworth Brow, on the eastern edge of the town. Giving the reins to a lad in the street, I went into the house, and took some refreshment with the rest of them, before starting; and, in a few minutes more, we were all seated, and away down the slope of Heybrook, on the Littleborough Road. Our tit had a mercurial trick of romping on his hind legs, at the start; but apart from this, he went a steady, telling pace, and we looked about us quite at ease as we sped along.

Heybrook, at the foot of Wardleworth Brow, is one of the pleasantest entrances to Rochdale town. There is a touch of suburban peace and prettiness about it; and the prospect, on all sides, is agreeable to the eye. The park-like lands of Foxholes and Hamer lie close by the north side of the road. The lower part of these grounds consists of rich, flat meadows, divided by a merry little brook, which flows from the hills on the north, above "Th' Syke." In its course from the moors, to the river Roch, it takes the name of each locality it passes through, and is called "Syke Brook," "Buckley Brook," and "Hey Brook;" and, on its way, it gathers tributary rindles of water from Clough House, Knowl, and Knowl Syke. As the Foxholes grounds recede from the high road, they undulate, until they rise into an expansive, lawny slope, clothed with a verdure which looks—when wet with summer rain or dew—"like nothing else in the universe," out of England. This slope is tastefully crowned with trees. Foxholes Hall is situated among its old woods and lawns, retiringly, upon the summit of this swelling upland, which rises from the level of Heybrook. It is a choice corner of the earth, and the view thence, between the woods, across the lawn and meadows, and over a picturesquely-varied country, to the blue hills in the south-east, is perhaps not equalled in the neighbourhood. Pleasant and green as much of the land in this district looks now, still the general character of the soil, and the whole of its features, shows that when nature had it to herself very much of it must have been sterile or swampy Looking towards Foxholes, from the road-side at Heybrook, over the tall ancestral trees, we can see the still taller chimney of John Bright and Brothers' mill, peering up significantly behind; and the sound of their factory bell now mingles with the cawing of an ancient colony of rooks in the Foxholes woods. Foxholes is the seat of the Entwisles, a distinguished old Lancashire family. In the time of Camden, the historian, this family was seated at Entwisle Hall, near Bolton-le-Moors. George Entwisle de Entwisle left as heir his brother William, who married Alice, daughter of Bradshaw, of Bradshaw. His son Edmund, the first Entwisle of Foxholes, near Rochdale, built the old hall, which stood on the site of the present one. He married a daughter of Arthur Ashton, of Clegg; and his son Richard married Grace, the daughter of Robert Chadwick, of Healey Hall. In the parish church there is a tablet to the memory of Sir Bertin Entwisle, who fought at

Agincourt, on St. Crispin's Day, in Henry the Fifth's time. When a lad, I used to con over this tablet, and I wove a world of romance around this mysterious "Sir Bertin," and connected him with all that I had heard of the prowess of old English chivalry. The tablet runs thus:—

To perpetuate a memorial erected in the church of St. Peter's, St. Albans (perished by time), this marble is here placed to the memory of a gallant and loyal man—Sir Bertin Entwisle, Knt., viscount and baron of Brybeke, in Normandy, and some time bailiff of Constantine, in which office he succeeded his brother-in-law, Sir John Ashton, whose daughter first married Sir Richard le Byron, an ancestor of the Lords Byron, of Rochdale, and, secondly, Sir Bertin Entwisle, who, after repeated acts of honour in the service of his sovereigns, Henrys the Fifth and Sixth, more particularly at Agincourt, was killed in the first battle of St. Albans, and on his tombstone was recorded in brass the follow inscription:—"Here lyeth Sir Bertin Entwisle, Knight, who was born in Lancastershyre, and was viscount and baron of Brybeke, in Normandy, and bailiff of Constantine, who died, fighting on King Henry the Sixth's party, the 28th May. 1455, on whose soul Jesus have mercy."

Close by the stone-bridge at Heybrook, two large old trees stand in the Entwisle grounds, one on each bank of the stream, and partly overhanging the road; they stand there alone, as if to mark where a forest has been. The tired country weaver, carrying his piece to the town, lays down his burden on the parapet, wipes his brow, and rests under their shade. I have gone sometimes, on bright nights, to lean upon the bridge and look around there, and I have heard many a plaintive trio sung by these old trees and the brook below, while the moonlight danced among the leaves.

The whole valley of the Roch is a succession of green knolls, and dingles, and little receding vales, with now and then a barren stripe, like "Cronkeyshaw," or a patch of the once large mosses, like "Turf Moss;" and little holts and holms, no two alike in feature or extent, dotted, now and then, with tufts of stunted wood, with many a clear brook and silvery rill between. On the south side of the bridge at Heybrook, the streamlet from the north runs through the meadows a short distance, and empties itself into the Roch. The confluence of the waters there is known to the neighbour lads by the name of the "Greyt Meetin's," where, in past years, I have

Paidle't through the burn
When simmer days were fine,

in a certain young companionship—now more scattered than last autumn's leaves; some in other towns, one or two only still here, and the rest in Australia, or in the grave. We now no longer strip in the field there, and, leaving our clothes and books upon

the hedge side, go frolicking down to the river, to have a water battle and a bathe—finishing by drying ourselves with our shirts, or by running in the wind on the green bank. I remember that sometimes, whilst we were in the height of our sport, the sentinel left upon the brink of the river would catch a glimpse of the owner of the fields, coming hastily towards the spot, in wrathful mood; whereupon every naked imp rushed from the water, seized his clothes, and fled from field to field, till he reached some nook where he could put them on. From the southern margin of the Roch, the land rises in a green elevation, on which the hamlet of Belfield is seen peeping up. The tree-tops of Belfield Wood are in sight, but the ancient hall is hidden. A little vale on the west, watered by the Biel, divides Belfield Hall from the hamlet of Newbold, on the summit of the opposite bank. So early as the commencement of the twelfth century, a family had adopted the local name, and resided in the mansion till about the year 1290, when the estate was transferred to the family of Butterworth, of Butterworth Hall, near Milnrow. I find the Belfield family mentioned in Gastrel's "Notitia Cestriensis," p. 40, under the head "Leases granted by the bishop," where the following lease appears:—"An. 1546. Let by H. Ar. Belfield and Robt. Tatton, for 40 years, exceptis omus vicariis advocationibus ecclesiariu quarumcunque, (ing) to find great timber, tiles, and slate, and tenants to repair and find all other materials." The following note is attached to this lease:—"Arthur Belfield, of Clegg Hall, in the parish of Rochdale, gent., son and heir of Adam Belfield, was born in 1508, and succeeded his father in 1544. He is described in the lease as 'off our sayde sovaraigne lord's houshold, gentylman;' but what office he held is, at present, unknown. He was a near relative of the Hopwoods, of Hopwood, and Chethams, of Nuthurst." In the year 1274, Geoffry de Butterworth, a descendent of Reginald de Boterworth, first lord of the township of Butterworth, in the reign of Stephen, 1148, sold or exchanged the family mansion of Butterworth Hall, with John Byron, ancestor of Lord Byron, the poet, and took possession (by purchase or otherwise) of Belfield, which was part of the original possession of the knights of St. John of Jerusalem. When the monks of Stanlaw, in Cheshire—disliking their low, swampy situation there, which was subject to inundation at spring tide—removed to the old deanery of Whallev. before entering the abbey there,

in the roll of the fraternity four seem to have been natives of Rochdale, among whom was John de Belfield, afterwards Abbot of Whalley, of the ancient stock of Belfield Hall, in Butterworth. Robert de Butterworth was killed at the battle of Towton, in 1461. The last of the name, at Belfield, was Alexander Butterworth, born in 1640, in the reign of Charles the First. The present occupants of the estate have tastefully preserved the old interesting features of the hall, whilst they have greatly improved its condition and environments. The stone gateway, leading to the inner court-yard of Belfield Hall, is still standing, as well as a considerable portion of the old hall which surrounded this inner court. The antique character of the building is best seen from the quadrangular court-yard in the centre. The door of the great kitchen formerly opened into this court-yard, and the victuals used to be brought out thence, and handed by the cooks through a square opening in the wall of the great dining-room, on the north side of the yard, to the waiters inside. The interior of the building still retains many quaint features of its olden time—heavy oak-beams, low ceilings, and tortuous corners. Every effort has been made to line the house with an air of modern comfort; still the house is said to be a cold one, partly from its situation, and partly from the porous nature of the old walls; producing an effect something like that of a wine-cooler. That part of the building which now forms the rear, used, in old times, to be the main front. In one of the rooms, there are still some relics of the ancient oak-carving which lined the walls of the hall. Among them there are three figures in carved oak, which formed part of the wainscot of a cornice, above one of the fire-places. These were the figures of a king and two queens, quaintly cut; and the remnants of old painting upon the figures, and the rich gilding upon the crowns, still show traces of their highly-ornamented, ancient appearance. The roads in the neighbourhood of the hall are now good. The hamlets of Newbold and Belfield are thriving, with substantial, healthy dwellings. Shady walks are laid among the plantations; and the springs of excellent water are now gathered into clear terraced pools and a serpentine lake, glittering among gardens and cultivated grounds.

Leaving Heybrook, we passed by Hamer Hall, which was the seat of a family of the same name, before Henry the Fourth's time. A large cotton-mill now stands close behind the hall. A

few yards through the toll-bar, we passed the "Entwisle Arms," bearing the motto, "Par se signe à Azincourt." A traveller seldom needs to ask the names of the old lords of the land in England. Let him keep an eye to the sign-boards, and he is sure to find that part of the history of the locality swinging in the wind, or stapled up over the entrance of some neighbouring alehouse. And, in the same barmy atmosphere, he may learn, at least, as much heraldry as he will be able to find a market for on the Manchester Exchange. The public-house signs in our old towns are generally very loyal and heraldic, and sometimes touched with a little jovial devotion. The arms of kings, queens, and bishops; and mitres, chapel-houses, angels, and "amen corners," mingling with "many a crest that is famous in story;" the arms of the Stanleys, Byrons, Asshetons, Traffords, Lacys, Wiltons, De-la-Warres, Houghtons, Molyneuxs, Pilkingtons, Radcliffes, and a long roll of old Lancashire gentry, whose fame is faintly commemorated in these alehouse signs; and, among the mottoes of these emblazonments, we now and then meet with an ancient war-cry, which makes one's blood start into tumult, when we think how it may have sounded on the fields of Cressy, Agincourt, Towton, or Flodden. Among these are sprinkled spread eagles, dragons, griffins, unicorns, and horses, black, white, bay, and grey, with corresponding mares, and shoes enow for them all. Boars, in every position and state of temper; bulls, some crowned, some with rings in the nose, like our friend "John" of that name. Foxes, too, and dogs, presenting their noses with admirable directness of purpose at something in the next street; and innocent-looking partridges, who appear reckless of the intentions of the sanguinary wretch in green, who is erroneously supposed to be *lurking* behind the bush, with a gun in his hand. Talbots, falcons, hawks, hounds and huntsmen, the latter sometimes in "full cry," but almost always considerably "at fault," so far as perspective goes. Swans, black and white, with any number of necks that can be reasonably expected; stags, saints, saracens, jolly millers, boars' heads, blue bells, pack-horses, lambs, rams, and trees of oak and yew. The seven stars, and, now and then, a great bear. Lions, of all colours, conditions, and positions—resting, romping, and running; with a number of apocryphal animals, not explainable by any natural history extant, nor to be found anywhere, I believe, except in the swamps and jungles of some drunken dauber's brain. Also a few

"Jolly Waggoners," grinning extensively at foaming flagons of ale, garnished with piles of bread and cheese, and onions as big as cannon-balls, as if to outface the proportions of the Colossus of Rhodes, who sits there in a state of stiff, everlasting, clumsy, good-tempered readiness, in front of his never-dwindling feed. Marlboroughs, Abercrombies, and Wellingtons; Duncans, Rodneys, and Nelsons, by dozens. I have seen an admiral painted on horseback, somewhere; but I never saw Cromwell on an alehouse sign yet. In addition to these, there are a few dukes, mostly of York and Clarence. Such signs as these show the old way of living and thinking. But, in our manufacturing towns, the tone of these old devices is considerably modified by an infusion of railway hotels, commercials, cotton-trees, shuttles, spindles, woolpacks, Bishop Blaizes, and "Old Looms;" and the arms of the ancient feudal gentry are outnumbered by the arms of shepherds, foresters, moulders, joiners, printers, bricklayers, painters, and several kinds of odd-fellows. The old "Legs of Man," too, are relieved by a comfortable sprinkling of legs and shoulders of mutton—considerably overdone by the weather, in some cases. Even alehouse signs are "signs of the times," if properly interpreted. But both men and alehouse signs may make up their minds to be misinterpreted a little in this world. Two country lasses, at Rochdale, one fair-day, walking by the Roebuck Inn, one of them, pointing to the gilded figure of the animal, with its head uplifted to an overhanging bunch of gilded grapes, said, "Sitho, sitho, Mary, at yon brass dog, heytin' brass marrables!"

About half-a-mile up the high road from Heybrook, and opposite to Shaw House, the view opens, and we can look across the fields on either side, into a country of green pastures and meadows, varied with fantastic hillocks and dells, though bare of trees. A short distance to the north-west, Buckley Hall lately stood, on a green eminence in sight from the road. But the old house of the Buckleys, of Buckley, recently disappeared from the knoll where it stood for centuries. Its thick, bemossed walls are gone, and all its quaint, abundant outhousing that stood about the spacious, balder-paved yard behind. This old hall gave name and residence to one of the most ancient families in Rochdale parish. The building was low, but very strongly built of stone of the district, and heavily timbered. It was not so large as Clegg Hall, nor Stubley Hall, nor as some other old halls in the parish; but, for its size, it proved a considerable quarry of stone

and flag when taken down. The first occupier was Geoffry de Buckley, nephew to Geoffry, dean of Whalley, who lived in the time of Henry the Second. A descendant of this Geoffry de Buckley was slain in the battle of Evesham ("History of Whalley"). The name of John de Buckley appears among the monks of Stanlaw, in the year 1296. The arms of the Buckleys, of Buckley, are gules, a chevron sable; between three bulls' heads, armed proper; crest, on a wreath, a bull's head armed proper. Motto, "Nec temere nec timede." There is a chantry chapel at the south-east corner of Rochdale parish church, "founded in 1487, by Dr. Adam Marland, of Marland; Sir Randal Butterworth, of Belfield; and Sir James Middleton, 'a brotherhood maide and ordayned in the worship of the glorious Trinity, in the church of Rochdale;' Sir James being appointed Trinity priest during his lyfe; and, among other things, he was requested, when he went to the lavoratory, standing at the altar, and, twice a week, to pray for the co-founders, with 'De profundis.'" In this little chantry, there is a recumbent stone effigy of a mailed warrior, of the Buckley family, placed there by the present lord of the manor, whose property the chapel is now. I know that some of the country people who had been reared in the neighbourhood of Buckley Hall, watched its demolition with grieved hearts. And when the fine old hall at Radcliffe was taken down, not long since, an aged man stood by, vigorously denouncing the destroyers as the work went on, and glorying in every difficulty they met with; and they were not few, for it was a tough old place. "Poo," said he, "yo wastril devils, poo! Yo connut rive th' owd hole deawn for th' heart on yo! Yo'n ha' to blow it up wi' gunpeawdhur, bi'th mass. It wur noan bigged eawt o' club brass, that wur not, yo shabby thieves! Tay th' pattern on't, an' yo'n larn summat! What mak' o' trash wi'n yo stick up i'th place on't, when it's gwon? Those wholes u'll bide leynin again, better nor yors! Yo'n never big another heawse like that while yo'n teeth an' e'en in yor yeds! Eh, never, never! Yo hannut stuff to do it wi'!" But down came the old hall at Radcliffe; and so did Buckley Hall, lately; and the materials were dressed up to build the substantial row of modern cottages which now stand upon the same site, with pleasant gardens in front, sloping down the knoll, and over the spot where the old fish-pond was, at the bottom. Some of the workpeople at the neighbouring woollen mill find comfortable housing there now. There is an

old tradition, respecting the Buckley family, connected with a massive iron ring which was found fastened in the flooring of a deserted chamber of the hall. A greyhound, belonging to this family, whilst in London with its master, took off homeward on being startled by the fall of a heavy package, in Cheapside, and was found dead on the door-step of Buckley Hall at five next morning, after having run one hundred and ninety-six miles in sixteen hours. When visiting relatives of mine near Buckley, I met with a story relating to one of the Buckleys of old, who was a dread to the country side; how he pursued a Rossendale rider, who had crossed the moors from the forest, to recover a stolen horse from the stables of Buckley Hall by night; and how this Buckley, of Buckley, overtook and shot him, at a lonely place called "Th' Hillock," between Buckley and Rooley Moor. There are other floating oral traditions connected with Buckley Hall, especially the tale of "The Gentle Shepherdess," embodying the romantic adventures, and unfortunate fate of a lady belonging to the family of Buckley, of Buckley. And in this wide parish of Rochdale, in the eastern nook of Lancashire,—once a country fertile in spots of lone and rural prettiness, and thinly inhabited by as quaint, hearty, and primitive a people as any in England,—there is many a picturesque and storied dell; some tales of historic interest; and many an interesting legend connected with the country, or with the old families of the parish;—the Byrons, of Butterworth Hall, barons of Rochdale; the Entwisles, of Foxholes; the Crossleys, of Scaitcliffe; the Holts, of Stubley, Grislehurst, and Castleton; the Cleggs, of Clegg Hall, the scene of the tradition of "Clegg Ho' Boggart;" the Buckleys, of Buckley; the Marlands, of Marland; the Howards, of Great Howard; the Chadwicks, of Chadwick Hall, and Healey Hall; the Bamfords, of Bamford; the Schofields, of Schofield; the Butterworths; the Belfields; and many other families of ancient note, often bearing the names of their own estates, in the old way.

In this part of South Lancashire, the traveller never meets any considerable extent of level land; and, though the county contains great moors, and some mosses, yet there is not such another expansive tract of level country to be found in it as "Chat Moss," that lonely grave of old forests. South-east Lancashire is all picturesque ups and downs, retired nooks, and "quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles," and little winding vales, with endless freaks of hill and hillock, knoll and dell, dingle

and shady cleft, laced with numerous small streamlets, and clear rindles of babbling water, up to the foot of that wilderness of moorland hills, the "Back-bone of England," which runs across the island, from Derbyshire into Scotland, and forms a considerable part of Lancashire upon its way. The parish of Rochdale partly consists of, and is bounded by, this tract of hills on the east and north; and what may be called the lowland part of the parish looks, when seen from some of the hills in the immediate neighbourhood, something like a sea of tempest-tossed meadows and pasture lands, upon which fleets of cotton mills ride at anchor, their brick masts rising high into the air, and their streamers of smoke waving in the wind.

Leaving the open part of the high road, opposite Shaw House, and losing sight of Buckley, we began to rise as we passed through Brickfield up to Smallbridge. This village is seated on an elevation, sloping gently from the northern bank of the river Roch, which rise continues slightly through the village, and up northward, with many a dip and frolic by the way, till it reaches the hills above Wardle Fold, where nature leaps up in a wild and desolate mood. Some of the lonely heights thereabouts have been beacon stations, in old times, and their names indicate their ancient uses, as "Ward Hill," above the village of Wardle. "Jack th' Huntsman" used to declare, vehemently, that Brown Wardle Hill was "th' finest hunting-greawnd i' Lancashire." And then there is "Tooter's Hill," "Hornblower's Hill," and "Hade's Hill." From the summit of the last, the waters descend on one side to the Irish Sea, on the west, on the other to the German Ocean, on the east. The remains of a large beacon are still visible on the top of it. Looking southward, from the edge of Smallbridge, the dale lies green and fair in the hollow below, and the silent Roch winds through it towards Rochdale town. The view stretches out several miles beyond the opposite bank of the river, over the romantic township of Butterworth, up to the Saddleworth hills. Green and picturesque, a country of dairy farms, producing matchless milk and butter; yet the soil is evidently too cold and poor for the successful production of any kind of grain, except the hardy oat—and that crop mostly thin and light as an old man's hair. But even this extensive view over a beautiful scene, in other respects, lacks the charm which green woods lend to a landscape; for, except a few diminutive tufts and scattered patches, where young plantations struggle up,

there are scarcely any trees. From Smallbridge, taking a south-east direction, up by "Tunshill," "Dolderum," "Longden End," and "Booth Dean," and over the Stanedge road, into the ravines of Saddleworth, would be a long flight for the crow; but to anybody who had to foot the road thither, it would prove a rougher piece of work than it looks. The village of Smallbridge itself consists principally of one street, about half a mile long, lining the high road from Rochdale to Littleborough. It will have a dull, uninteresting look to a person who knows nothing, previously, of the place, nor of the curious generation dwelling thereabouts. Smallbridge has a plain, hard-working, unpolished, every-day look. No wandering artist, in search of romantic bits of village scenery, would halt enchanted with Smallbridge. It has no architectural relic of the olden time in it, nor any remarkable modern building—nothing which would tell a careless eye that it had been the homestead of many generations of Lancashire men. It consists, chiefly, of the brick-built cottages, inhabited by weavers, colliers, and factory operatives, relieved by the new Episcopalian church, at the eastern end, the little pepper-box bell-turret of which peeps up over the houses, as if to remind the rude inhabitants of something higher than bacon-collops and ale. About half a mile up the road which leads out of the centre of the village, northward, stands a plain-looking stone mansion, apparently about one hundred and fifty years old, called "Great Howarth." It stands upon a shapely knoll, the site of an older hall of the same name, and has pleasant slopes of green land about it, and a wide prospect over hill and dale. Extensive alterations, in the course of the last hundred years, have destroyed most of the evidences of this place's age and importance; but its situation, and the ancient outbuildings behind, and the fold of cottages nestling near to the western side of the hall, with peeping bits of stone foundation, of much older date than the building standing upon them; the old wells, and the hue of the lands round about; all show that it has been a place of greater note than it is at present. This great Howarth, or Howard, is said to be the original settlement of the Howard family, the present Dukes of Norfolk. Some people in the neighbourhood also seem to believe this, for, as we entered Smallbridge, we passed "The Norfolk Arms," a little public-house. One Osbert Howard was rewarded by Henry I. ("Beauclerk") for his faithful services, with lands situate in the township of Honorsfield, or

Hundersfield, in the parish of Rochdale, also with what is called "the dignified title of Master of the Buck Hounds." Robertus Howard, Abbot of Stanlaw, was one of the four monks from this parish, whose names appear among the list of the fraternity, at the time of their translation to Whalley. He died on the 10th of May, 1304. Dugdale, in his "Baronage of England," says, respecting the Howards, Dukes of Norfolk:—"I do not make any mention thereof above the time of King Edward the First, some supposing that their common ancestor, in the Saxon's time, took his original appellation from an eminent office or command; others, afterwards, from the name of a place." . . "I shall, therefore (after much fruitless search to satisfy myself, as well as others, on this point) begin with William Howard, a learned and reverend judge of the Court of Common Pleas, for a great part of King Edward the First's and beginning of Edward the Second's time." So that there seems to be a possibility of truth in the assertion that Great Howard, or Howarth, near Smallbridge, was the original settlement of the Howards, ancestors of the Dukes of Norfolk. But I must leave the matter to those who have better and completer evidence than this. Aiken, in his "History of Manchester," mentions a direful pestilence, which severely afflicted that town about the year 1645. A pestilence called the "Black Plague" raged in the parish of Rochdale about the same time. "The whole district being filled with dismay, none dared, from the country, to approach the town, for fear of catching the contagion; therefore, to remedy, as much as possible, the inconvenience of non-intercourse between the country and town's people, the proprietor of Gteat Howarth directed a cross to be raised on a certain part of his estate, near to Black Lane End, at Smallbridge, for the purpose of holding a temporary market there, during the continuance of the plague." Thence originated "Howarth Cross," so named to this day; also, the old "Milk Stones," or "Plague Stones," lately standing at about a mile's distance from the town of Rochdale, upon the old roads. I well remember two of these, which were large, heavy flag-stones, with one end imbedded in the edge side, and the other end supported upon rude stone pillars. One of these two was in "Milk Stone Lane," leading towards Oldham, and the other at "Sparth," about a mile on the Manchester road. This last of these old "Milk Stones," or "Plague Stones," was recently taken down. I find that similar stones were erected

in the outlets of Manchester, for the same purpose, during the pestilence, about 1645. The village of Smallbridge itself, as I have said before, has not much either of modern grace or antique interest about its outward appearance. But, in the secluded folds and corners of the country around, there is many a quaint farmstead of the seventeenth century, or earlier, such as Waterhouse, Ashbrook Hey, Howarth Knowl, Little Howarth, Dearnley, Mabroyd, Wuerdle, Little Clegg, Clegg Hall (the haunt of the famous "Clegg Ho' Boggart"). Wardle Fold, near Wardle Hall, was fifty years since only a small sequestered cluster of rough stone houses, at the foot of the moorland heights, on the north, and about a mile from Smallbridge. It has thriven considerably by manufacture since then. In some of these old settlements there are houses where the door is still opened from without by a "sneck-bant," or "finger-hole." Some of these old houses have been little changed for two or three centuries; around others a little modern addition has gathered in the course of time; but the old way of living and thinking lingers in these remote corners still, like little standing pools, left by the tide of ancient manners, which has gone down, and is becoming matter of history or of remembrance. There, and in the still more lonely detached dwellings and folds, which are scattered among the hills and cloughs of the "Edge," they cling to the speech, and ways, and superstitions of their rude forefathers. A tribe of hardy, industrious, old-fashioned, simple-hearted folk, whose principal fear is poverty and "boggarts." They still gather round the fire, in corners where factories have not yet reached them, in the gray gloaming, and on dark nights in winter, to feed their imaginations with scraps of old legend, and tales of boggarts, fairies, and "feeorin," that haunt their native hills, and dells, and streams; and they look forward with joy to the ancient festivals of the year, as reliefs to their lonely round of toil. But Smallbridge had other interests for us besides those arising out of its remote surrounding nooks and population. We had known the village ever since the time when a ramble so far out from Rochdale seemed a great feat for tiny legs; and, as we passed each well-remembered spot, the flood-gates of memory were thrown open, and a whole tide of early reminiscences came flowing over the mind:—

> Floating by me seems
> My childhood, in this childishness of mine:
> I care not—'tis a glimpse of "Auld lang syne."

The inhabitants of different Lancashire towns and villages have often some generic epithet attached to them, supposed to be expressive of their character; as, for the inhabitants of Oldham and Bolton, "Owdham Rough Yeds," and "Bowton Trotters;" and the people of Smallbridge are known throughout the vale by the name of "Smo'bridge Cossacks." Within the last twenty years, the inhabitants of the village have increased in number, and improved in education and manners. Before that time the place was notable for its rugged people; even in a district generally remarkable for an old-world breed of men and manners. Their misdemeanours arose more from exuberant vigour of heart and body, than from natural moral debasement. Twenty years since there was no church in Smallbridge, no police to keep its rude people in order—no effective school of any sort. The weavers and colliers had the place almost to themselves in those days. They worked hard, and ate and drank as much as their earnings would afford, especially on holidays, or "red-letter days;" and, at by-times, they clustered together in their cottages, but oftener at the road-side, or in some favourite alehouse, and solaced their fatigue with such scraps of news and politics as reached them; or by pithy, idiomatic bursts of country humour, and old songs. Sometimes these were choice snatches of the ballads of Britain, really beautiful "minstrel memories of times gone by;" such as we seldom hear now, and still seldomer hear sung with the feeling and natural taste which the country lasses of Lancashire put into them, while chanting at their work. Some of Burns's songs, and many songs commemorating the wars of England, were great favourites with them. Passing by a country alehouse, one would often hear a rude ditty, like the following, sounding loud and clear from the inside:—

> You generals all, and champions bold,
> Who take delight i'th field;
> Who knock down palaces and castle walls,
> And never like to yield;
> I am an Englishman by birth,
> And Marlbro' is my name;
> In Devonshire I first drew breath,
> That place of noble fame.

Or this finishing couplet of another old ballad:—

> To hear the drums and the trumpets sound,
> In the wars of High Garmanie!

I well remember that the following were among their favourites:—"O, Nanny, wilt thou gang wi' me?" "Jockey to the Fair,"

"Owd Towler," "The Banks of the Dee," "Black Eyed Susan," "Highland Mary," "The Dawning of the Day," "The Garden Gate," and "The Woodpecker." There are, also, a few rough, humorous songs in the Lancashire dialect, which are very common among them. The best of these is the rudely-characteristic ballad called "Jone o' Greenfelt," and "The Songs of the Wilsons," of which the following, known by the name of "Johnny Green's Wedding," and "Description of Manchester College," by Alexander Wilson, is sufficient to show the manner and characteristics of the remainder of these popular local songs:—

Neaw lads, wheer are yo beawn so fast?
Yo happun ha no yerd what's past:
Aw gettun wed sin a'r here th' last,
  Just three week sin come Sunday.
Aw ax'd th' owd folk, an aw wur reet,
So Nan an me agreed tat neet,
At iv we could mak both eends meet,
  We'd be wed o' Ayster Monday.

That morn', as prim as pewter quarts,
Aw th' wenches coom, a browt t' sweethearts;
Aw fund we're loike to ha' three carts,—
  'Twur thrunk as Eccles wakes, mon;
We donn'd eawr tits i' ribbins to,—
One red, one green, an tone wur blue;
So hey! lads, hey! away we flew,
  Loike a race for th' Leger stakes, mon.

Right merrily we drove, full bat;
An eh! heaw Duke an Dobbin swat;
Owd Grizzle wur so lawn an fat,
  Fro' soide to soide hoo jow'd um:
Deawn Withy Grove at last we coom,
An stopt at th' Seven Stars by gum,
An drunk as mich warm ale an rum,
  As 'ud dreawn o' th' folk i' Owdham.

When th' shot wur paid, an th' drink wur done,
Up Fennel-street, to th' church for fun,
We doanced loike morris-doancers dun,
  To th' best o' aw my knowledge:
So th' job wur done, i' hauve a crack;
Boh eh! what fun to get th' first smack;
So neaw, my lads, 'fore we gwon back,
  Says aw, "We'n look at th' College."

We see'd a clock-case first, good laws!
Where Deoth stonds up wi' great lung claws;
His legs, an wings, an lantern jaws,
  They really look't quite feorink.
There's snakes an watchbills, just like pikes,
At Hunt an aw th' reformin' tikes,
An thee, an me, an Sam o' Mikes,
  Once took a blanketeerink.

Eh! lorjus days, booath far an woide,
Theer's yards o' books at every stroide,
Fro' top to bothum, eend, an soide,
  Sich plecks there's very few so:

Aw axt him iv they wur'n to sell,
For Nan loikes readink vastly well ;
Boh th' measter wur eawt, so he could naw tell,
Or aw'd a bowt her Robinson Crusoe.

Theer's a trumpet speyks and maks a din,
An a shute o' clooas made o' tin,
For folk to go a feightink in,
Just like thoose chaps o' Boney's ;
An theer's a table carved so queer,
Wi' as mony planks as days i'th year,
An crinkum-crankums here an theer,
Like th' clooas-press at my grouny's.

Theer's Oliver Crumill's bombs and balls,
An Frenchmen's guns they'd tean i' squalls,
An swords, as lunk as me, o' th' walls,
An bows an arrows too, mon :
Aw didno moind his fearfo words,
Nor skeletons o' men an burds ;
Boh aw fair hate th' seet o' greyt lung swords,
Sin th' feight at Peterloo, mon.

We see'd a wooden cock likewise ;
Boh dang it, mon, these college boys,
They tell'n a pack o' starin' loies,
As sure as teaw'rt a sinner :
"That cock, when it smells roast beef, 'll crow,"
Says he ; "Boh," aw said, "teaw lies, aw know,
An aw con prove it plainly so,
Aw've a peawnd i' my hat for th' dinner."

Boh th' hairy mon had miss'd my thowt,
An th' clog fair crackt by th' thunner-bowt,
An th' woman noather lawmt nor nowt,
Theaw ne'er seed loike sin t'ur born, mon.
Theer's crocodiles, an things, indeed,
Aw colours, mak, shap, size, an breed ;
An if aw moot tell toan hauve aw see'd,
We moot sit an smook till morn, mon.

Then deawn Lung Millgate we did steer,
To owd Mike Wilson's goods-shop theer,
To bey eawr Nan a rockink cheer,
An pots, an spoons, an ladles :
Nan bowt a glass for lookink in
A tin Dutch o'on for cookink in ;
Aw bowt a cheer for smookink in,
And Nan axed th' price o' th' cradles.

Then th' fiddler struck up "Th' Honey Moon,"
An off we set for Owdam soon :
We made owd Grizzle trot to th' tune,
Every yard o' th' way, mon.
At neet, oytch lad an bonny lass,
Laws ! heaw they doanc'd an drunk their glass ;
So toyrt wur Nan an me, by th' mass,
At we lee till twelve th' next day, mon.

When the horn sounded to gather the harriers, or the "foomart dogs," the weaver lads used to let go their "pickin'-pegs," roll up their aprons, and follow the chase afoot, with all the keen relish of their forefathers, returning hungry, tired, and pleased at night,

to relate the adventures of the day. Sometimes they sallied from the village, in jovial companies, attended by one or more of their companions, to have a drinking-bout, and challenge "th' cocks o' th' clod" in some neighbouring hamlet. Such expeditions often led to a series of single combats, in which rude bodily strength and pluck were the principal elements of success; sometimes a general *melée*, or "Welsh main," took place; often ending in painful journeys, with broken bones, over the moors, to the "Whitworth Doctors." As far as rough sports and rough manners went, "the dule" seemed to have "thrut his club" over Smallbridge in those days. That man was lucky who could walk through the village without being assailed by something more inconvenient than mere looks of ignorant wonder, and a pelting of coarse jokes; especially if he happened to wear the appearance of a "teawn's buck." They had a kind of contempt for "teawn's folk," as an inferior race, especially in body. If town's people had more intelligence than was common in the country, these villagers often affected to consider it a knavish cleverness; and if they seemed externally clean, they looked upon it as an hypocritical concealment of the filth beneath. If they were well dressed, the old doubt arose, as to its being "o' paid for;" and if one appeared among them who had no settled home or connections, and whose demeanour they did not like, he had "done summat wrang somewheer, or elze he'd ne'er ha' bin o' that shap." In fact, it was hardly possible for people bred in a town to be as clean, strong, or honest, as those bred in the country. Town's folk had nothing wholesome about them; they were "o' offal an' boylin-pieces." When they visited Manchester, or any of the great towns about, they generally took a supply of eatables with them for the journey; "coud frog-i'-th'-hole puddin," or "fayberry cake," or "sodden moufin an' cheese," or such like homely buttery-stuff; for if they had occasion to enter any strange house in such places, to satisfy their hunger, every mouthful went down among painful speculations as to what the quadruped was when alive, and what particular reason it had for departing this life. Burns alludes affectionately to "the halesome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food;" and oatmeal porridge, and oat-cake, enter largely into the diet of the country people in this part of Lancashire. They used to pride themselves in the name of "the Havercake Lads." A regiment raised in Lancashire during the last war bore this name. This oat-cake is

baked upon a peculiar kind of stone slab, called a "back-stone;" and the cry of "Havercake back-stones" is a familiar sound in Rochdale, and the villages around it, at this day. Oatmeal porridge forms an important element of a genuine Lancashire breakfast in the country. I have often noticed the air of satisfaction with which a Lancashire housewife has filled up the great breakfast bowl with hot oatmeal porridge, and, clapping the pan on the floor, said, "Theer, lads, pultiz yo'r stomachs wi' thoose!" And the hungry, hearty youngsters have gathered hastily round their old dish, welcoming it with the joyous ejaculation of "That's th' mak'!" The thick unleavened oat-cake, called "Jannock," is scarcely ever seen in South-east Lancashire now; but it used to be highly esteemed. The common expression, "That's noan jannock," applied to anything which is not what it ought to be, commemorates the fame of this wholesome old cake of theirs. But they have no inclination to an exclusively vegetarian diet; in fact, they generally express a decided relish for "summat at's deed ov a knife;" and, like their ancient progenitors, the Saxons, they prefer heavy meals, and long draughts, to any kind of light epicurean nicety.

There are many old prejudices still cherished by the country people of south-east Lancashire,—as is their old belief in witches, witch-doctors, and "Planet-rulers;"—but they are declining, through increasing communion with the rest of the world. And then these things show only the unfavourable side of their character; for they are hospitable, open-handed, frank, and benevolent by nature. How oft have I seen them defend the downcast and the stranger; or shut up ungenerous suspicions, and open all the sluices of their native kindness by the simple expression, "He's somebody's chylt!"„

"Owd Roddle" is a broken-down village fuddler in Smallbridge; perpetually racking his brains about "another gill." His appearance is more that of an Indian Fakeer than an English country gentleman. He is as "concayted as a whisket" in some things, but not in eating or drinking; for he will "seawk lamp-hoyle through a bacco-pipe if onybody 'll give him a droight o' ale to wesh it deawn wi'; an' as for heytin', he'll heyt mortal thing—decod or alive—if he con get his teeth into't." A native of Smallbridge was asked, lately, what "Roddle" did for his living, and he replied, "Whaw, he wheels coals, and trails abeawt wi' his clogs loce, an' may's a foo' of his-sel' for ale." Yet, utterly

lost as Roddle is himself in person and habits, he is strongly imbued with the old prejudices against town's folk. To him, the whitest linen worn by a townsman, is only what the country folk call a "French white." A well-dressed person from Rochdale chanced one day to awaken "Roddle's" ire, who, eyeing him from head to foot, with a critical sneer, said, "Shap off whoam, as fast as tho con, an' get tat buff shurt sceawr't a bit, wilto; an' thy skin an' o; for theawr't wick wi' varmin; an' keep o' thy own clod, whol tho con turn eawt some bit like." "But," continued my informant, "aw'm a bit partial to th' offal crayter, for o' that; he's so mich gam in him, and aw like a foo i' my heart! Eh! he used to be as limber as a treawt when he're young; but neaw he's as wambly an' slamp as a barrow full o' warp-sizin'. Th' tother mornin' aw walked up to him for a bit ov a crack, as uzal, but th' owd lad had getten his toppin cut off close to his yed; an' he wacker't an' stare't like a twichelt dog; an' he gran at mo like mad. Aw're forc't dray back a bit, at th' first, he glooart so flaysome. It're very frosty, an' his een looked white and wild; an' as geawl't as a whelp. If the dule had met Roddle at th' turn of a lone that mornin' he'd a skriked hissel' eawt ov his wits, an' gwon deawn again. Eawr measther sauces me sometimes for talkin' to Roddle; but aw olez tell him at aw'st have a wort wi' th' poor owd twod when aw meet him, as what onybody says."

There is a race of hereditary sand-sellers, or "sond-knockers," in Smallbridge; a rough, mountaineer breed, who live by crushing sandstone rock, for sale in the town of Rochdale, and the villages about it. This sand is used for strewing upon the flagged house floors, when the floor is clean washed; and while it is yet damp, the sand is ground over it by the motion of a heavy "scouring-stone," to which a long, strong, wooden handle is firmly fixed, by being fastened to an iron claw, which grasps the stone, and is embedded into it by molten lead. The motion of the "scouring-stone" works the flags into smoothness, and leaves an ornamental whiteness on the floor when it gets dry; it breeds dust, however, and much needless labour. The people who knock this sand and sell it, have been known over the country side for many years by the name of "Th' Kitters;" and the common local proverb, "We're o' of a litter, like Kitter pigs," is used in Smallbridge, as an expression of friendship or of kinship. As regular as Saturday morning came, the sand-carts used to

come into Rochdale, heavily laden; and I remember that they were often drawn by horses which, like the steed of the crazy gentleman of Spain, were "many-cornered;" and, often, afflicted by some of the more serious ills which horse-flesh is heir to. They have better horses now, I believe, and they are better used. The train of attendants which usually accompanied these sand-carts into the town was of a curious description. Hardy, bull-necked, brown-faced drivers, generally dressed in strong fustian, which, if heavily plated with patches in particular quarters, was still mostly whole, but almost always well mauled, and soiled with the blended stains of sand, and spilt ale, and bacon fat, with clumsily-stiched rips visible here and there: the whole being a kind of tapestried chronicle of the wearer's way of living, his work, his fights, fuddles, and feasts. Then they were often bare-headed, with their breeches ties flowing loose at the knees, and the shirt neck wide open, displaying a broad, hairy, weather-beaten chest; and the jovial-faced, Dutch-built women, too, in blue lin aprons, blue woollen bedgowns, and clinkered shoon; and with round, wooden, peck and half-peck measures tucked under their arms, ready for "hawpoths" and "pennoths." As the cart went slowly along, the women went from house to house, on each side of the road, and, laying one hand upon the door cheek, looked in with the old familiar question, "Dun yo want ony sond this mornin'?" "Ay; yo may lev a hawputh. Put it i' this can." When they came to an old customer and acquaintance, sometimes a short conversation would follow, in a strain such as this: "Well, an heaw are yo, owd craythur?" "Whaw, aw'm noan as aw should be by a deeol. Aw can heyt nought, mon, an' aw connut tay my wynt." "Aw dunnot wonder at tat; yo'n so mich reech abeawt here. If yo'rn up at th' Smo'bridge, yo'dd'n be fit to heyt yirth-bobs an' scaplins, welly. Mon, th' wynt's clen up theer, an' there's plenty on't, an' wi can help irsels to't when we like'n. Wi'n yo come up o' seein' us?" "Eh, never name it! Aw's ne'er get eawt o' this hole till aw'm carried eawt th' feet formost!" "Come, wi'n ha' noan o' that mak o' talk! Aw'd as lief as a keaw-price at yo'dd'n come. Yo'n be welcome to th' best wi han, an wi'n may yo comfortable beside; an' bring yo deawn again i'th cart. But ir Jem's gwon forrud wi' th' sond. Let's see; did'n yo gi' mo th' hawp'ny? . . Oh, ay! It'll be reet! Neaw tay care o' yorsel', and keep yo'r heart eawt o' yo'r clogs!" When the

cart came to a rut or a rise in the road, all hands were summoned to the push, except one who tugged and thumped at the horse, and another who seized the spokes of the wheel, and, with set teeth and strained limbs, lent his aid to the "party of progress" in that way. Sometimes a sturdy skulker would follow the cart, to help to push, and to serve out sand; but more for a share of the fun, and the pile of boiled brisket and cheese an' moufin," stowed away in the cart-box at starting, to be washed down with "bally-droights of cold fourpenny at some favourite "co'in-shop" on the road.

The old custom of distinguishing persons by Christian names alone, prevails generally in Smallbridge, as in all country parts of Lancashire, more or less. It sometimes happens, in small country villages like this, that there are people almost unknown, even among their own neighbours, by their surnames. Roby gives an instance of this kind in his "Traditions of Lancashire," where he mentions a woman, then living in the village of Whitworth, for whom it would be useless to inquire there by her proper name; but anybody in the village could have instantly directed you to "Susy o' Yem's o' Fairoff's, at th' top o' th' Rake," by which name she was intimately known. Individuals are often met whose surnames have almost dropt into oblivion by disuse, and who have been principally distinguished through life by the name of their residence, or some epithet descriptive of a remarkable personal peculiarity, or some notable incident in their lives. Such names as the following, which will be recognised in their locality, are constantly met, and the list of them might be extended to any desirable degree:—"Tum o' Charles o' Billy's," or "Red Tum," "Bridfuut," "Corker," "Owd Fourpenny," "Tum o' Meawlo's," "Rantipow," and "Ab o' Pinder's," who fought a battle in the middle of the river Roch, at a great bull-bait in Rochdale, more than thirty years ago; "Bull Robin," "Jone o' Muzden's," "Owd Moreover," and "Bonny Meawth." This last reminds me of the report of a young villager, near Smallbridge, respecting the size of the people's mouths in a neighbouring district. "Thi'n th' bigg'st meawths i' yon country," said he, "at ever I seed clapt under a lip! Aw hove one on 'em his yure up, to see if his meawth went o' reawnd; but he knockt mo into th' slutch." Many of these quaint names rise in my memory as I write: "Owd Dragon," "Paul o' Bill's," "Plunge," "Ben o' Robin's o' Bob's o' th'

Bird-stuffers, o' Buersil Yed," "Collop," "Tolloll," "Pratty Strider," "Lither Dick," and "Reawnt Legs,"—

> Reawnt Legs he wur a cunnin' owd twod,
> He made a mule draw a four-horse lwod.

And then there was "Johnny Baa Lamb," a noted character in Rochdale twelve years ago. He was low in stature, rather stout, and very knock-knee'd; and his face was one paradise of never-fading ale-blossoms. Johnny's life was spent in helping about the slaughter-houses, and roaming from alehouse to ale-house, where, between his comical appearance, his drunken humour, his imitations of the tones of sheep, lambs, and other animals, and his old song,—

> The mon and the mare,
> Flew up in the air,
> An' I think I see 'em yet, yet, yet;—

the chorus of which he assisted by clattering a poker on the hearth, he was a general favourite, and kept himself afloat in ale—the staple of his ambition—by being the butt of every tap-room, where his memory remains embarmed. There was "Barfuut Sam," a carter, who never would wear any foot-gear; "Ab o' Slender's," "Broth," "Steeom," "Scutcher," "Peawch," and "Dick-in-a-Minnit." Most of these were as well known as the church clock. And then there was "Daunt o' Peggy's," "Brunner," "Shin 'em," "Ayli o' Joe's o' Bet's o' Owd Bullfuut's," and "Fidler Bill," who is mentioned in the Lancashire song, "Hopper hop't eawt, an' Limper limp't in,"—

> Then aw went to th' Peel's Arms to taste of their ale;
> They sup'n it so fast it never gwos stale!
> An' when aw'd set deawn, an' getten a gill,
> Who should come in boh Fidler Bill.
>
> He rambles abeawt through boroughs an' teawns,
> A' sellin' folk up as boh ow'n a few peawnds;

and then there was "Jone o' Isaac's," the mower; "Peyswad," and "Bedflock," who sowed blend-spice in his garden for parsley seed; and "Owd Tet, i' Crook," an amiable and aged country woman, who lived in a remote corner of the moors, above Smallbridge, and whose intended husband dying when she was very young, she took it deeply to heart. On being pressed to accept the hand of a neighbour, who knew her excellent qualities, she at last consented, assuring him, however, that her heart was gone, and all that she could promise him was that she could "spin an' be gradely;" which saying has become a local proverb.

In the forest of Rosendale, I have met with a few names of more curious structure than even any of the previous ones, such as "Eb o' Peg's o' Puddin' Jane's," "Bet o' Owd Harry's o' Nathan's at th' Change," "Enoch o' Jem's o' Rutchot's up at th' Nook," "Harry o' Mon John's," "Ormerod o' Jem's o' Bob's," and "Henry o' Ann's o' Harry's o' Milley's o' Ruchot's o' John's o' Dick's, through th' ginnel, an' up th' steps, an' o'er Joseph's o' John's o' Steen's," which rather extraordinary cognomen was given to me by a gentleman, living near Newchurch, as authentic, and well known in a neighbouring dale. In a village near Bolton, there was, a few years since, a letter-carrier who had so long been known by a nickname, that he had almost forgotten his proper name. By an uncommon chance, however, he once received a letter directed to himself, but not remembering the owner, or anybody of that name, he carried the letter in his pocket for several days, till he happened to meet with a shrewd old villager, whom his neighbours looked upon as "larn't up," and able to explain everything—from ale, bull-dogs, and politics, to the geography of the moon and the mysteries of theology. The postman showed his letter to this Delphic villager, inquiring whether he knew anybody of that name. The old man looked an instant, then, giving the other a thump, he said, "Thea foo', it's thisel'!" I have heard of many an instance, in different parts of Lancashire, where some generic "John Smith," after being sought for in vain for a while, has been at last discovered concealed under some such guise as "Iron Jack," "Plunge," "Nukkin," or "Bumper." I remember an old religious student, in Rochdale, who used to take considerable pains in drilling poor lads into a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. The early part of the Bible was his favourite theme; and he interlarded his conversation with it to such a degree, that he won for himself the distinguished title of "Th' Five Books o' Moses."

In Collier's tale of "Tummus and Meary," he illustrates the personal nomenclature of these parts, in his own time, by the following passage, which, though it may appear strange in the eyes of people dwelling in the great cities of the south of England, yet does not exaggerate the custom at present prevailing in the remoter parts of the county of Lancaster:—

Meary. True, Tummus; no marvel at o' wur so flayed; it wur so fearfo dark.
Tummus. Heawe'er, aw resolv't mayth best on't, an up speek aw.—"Wooaas tat?" A lad's voyce answer't in a cryin' din, "Eh, law; dunnah tay meh." "Naw," said aw, "aw'll na tay tho, belady! Whooas lad art to?" "Whau," said he, "aw'm

Jone o Lall's o' Simmy's, o' Mariom's o' Dick's o' Nathan's, o' Lall's o' Simmy's i'th Hooms: an' aw'm gooin' whoam." "Odd," thinks aw t' mysel', "theaw's a dree-er name ti'n me." An' here, Meary, aw couldn't boh think what lung names some on us han; for thine and mine are meeterly; boh this lad's wur so mich dree-er, 'at aw thowt it dockt mine tone hawve.

Meary. Preo, na; tell meh ha these lung names leet'n.

Tummus. Um—m; lemme see. Aw conno tell tho greadly; boh aw think it's to tell folk by.

Meary. Well, an' hea did'n he go on with him?"

Tummus. Then (as aw thowt he talkt so awkertly) aw'd ash him, for th' wonst, what uncuths he yerd sturrin'. "Aw yer noan," said he, "but 'at Jack o' Ned's towd mo, 'at Sam o' Jack's o' Yed's Marler has wed Mall o' Nan's o' Sal's o' Peg's, 'at gos abeawt o' beggin' churn milk, with a pitcher, with a lid on." Then aw asht him wheer Jack o' Ned's wooant. Says he, "He's 'prentice weh Isaac o' Tim's o' Nick's o'th Hough-lone, an' he'd bin at Jammy's o' George's o' Peter's i'th Dingles, for hawve a peawnd o' traycle, to seaws'n a beest-puddin' weh; an' his feyther an' moother wooan at Rossenda; boh his gronny's alive, an' wooans weh his noant Margery, eh Grinfilt, at pleck wheer his noan moother coom fro'." "Good lad," says aw, "boh heaw far's tis *Littlebrough* off, for aw aim't see it to-neet iv he con hit." Says t' lad, "It's abeawt a mile; an' yo mun keep straight forrud o' yor lift hont, an yoan happen do." So a-this'n we parted; boh aw mawkint, an' lost my gate again, snap.

A curious instance of the prevalence of nicknames in this district occurred, a few years since, about a mile from Smallbridge. A country lass had got married out of a certain fold in that part, and going down to Rochdale soon after, a female acquaintance said to her, "Whau, Sally, thea's getten wed, hasn't to?" "Yigh," said Sally, "aw have." "Well, an' what's te felly code?" replied the other. "Whau," said Sally, "some folk co's him 'Jone o' Nancy's lad, at th' Pleawm Heawse;' but his gradely name's 'Clog Bant.'" We sometimes hear of a son who bears the same christian name as his father, as "Jamie o' James's," and "Sol ov Owd Sol's o' th' Hout Broo;" and I have often heard a witless nursery rhyme, which runs,—

Owd Tum an' yung Tum,
An' Owd Tum's son;
Yung Tum 'll be a Tum
When Owd Tum's done;

but the poor people of Lancashire sometimes have a superstitious fear of giving the son the same christian name as the father.

The ancient rural festival of "Rushbearing," in the month of August, used to make a great stir in Smallbridge; but the observance of it seems to decline, or, at least, assumes a soberer form. A great number of local proverbs, and quaint sayings, are continually being thrown up by the population there, which, in spite of their rude garb, show, like nuggets of mental gold, what undeveloped riches lie hidden in the human mind, even in Smallbridge. The people are wonderfully apt at the discernment and at the delineation of character. It is very common for them to utter graphic sentences like the following:—"He's one

o' thoose at'll lend onybody a shillin', iv they'n give him fourteen-pence to stick to." One of them said, on receiving a present of game from his son in Yorkshire, "It isn't oft at th' kittlin' brings th' owd cat a meawse, but it has done this time." There are two or three out of a whole troop of anecdotes, told of the natives of this quarter, which have the air of nature about them sufficiently to indicate what some of the characteristics of these villagers were in past years. Two young men were slowly taking their road, late one night, out at the town end, after the fair, when one of them lingering behind the other, his comrade shouted to him to "Come on!" "Stop an' rosin," said the loiterer, "aw hannut foughten yet!" "Well," replied the other, with cool indifference, "Get foughten, an' let's go whoam?" In the Rev. W. Gaskell's lectures on the Lancashire dialect, he says, 'The following dialogue is reported to have taken place between two individuals on meeting:—'Han yo bin to Bowton?' 'Yigh.' 'Han yo foughten?' 'Yigh.' 'Han yo lickt'n?' 'Yigh; an' aw browten a bit'n him whoam i' my pocket!'" "Owd Bun" was a collier, and a comical country blade, dwelling near Smallbridge. He was illiterate, and rough as a hedgehog. Bun had often heard of cucumbers, but had never tasted one. Out of curiosity he bought a large one, curved like a scimitar; and, reckless of all culinary guidance, he cut it into slices lengthwise, and then fried the cold green slabs, all together, in bacon fat. He ate his fill of them, too; for nothing which mortal stomach would hold came amiss to Bun. When he had finished, and wiped the grease from his mouth with the back of his hand, he said, "By th' mon, fine folk 'll heyt aught! Aw'd sanur ha' had a potito!" They tell a tale, too, of the difficulties of a poor factory lass who had been newly married; which is not without its hints. Her husband told her to boil him some eggs, and to "boyle 'em soft." He went out awhile, and on his return, they were boiling, but not ready. He waited long, and then shouted, "Are thoose eggs noan ready yet?" "Naw," said she, "they are nut; for, sitho, aw've boyled 'em aboon an heawur, an' they're no softer yet." Now he did not care much for this; but when he saw her take the child's nightcap off its head to boil his dumpling in, he declared that "he couldn't ston it."

Leaving Smallbridge, we rattled out at the end of the village, past the Red Lion, and up to the top of the slope, where, after

a run of about two hundred yards, we descended into the hollow where the sign of the old "Green Gate" stands. In the season of the year, people passing that way in a morning will often see the door-way crowded with hunting dogs, and a rout of sturdy rabble, waiting to follow the chase, afoot, through the neighbouring hills. Rising again immediately, we crossed another knoll, and down again we came to the foot of the brow, where four roads meet, close by the "Green Mon Inn," opposite to the deserted hamlet of Wuerdale, which perches, with distressed look, upon a little ridge near the roadside, like an old beggar craving charity. On we went, enjoying the romantic variety of the scene, as the green ups and downs of the valley opened out to view, with its scattered farms and mills, all clipt in by the hills, which began to cluster near.

About half a mile further on, where the road begins to slant suddenly towards Featherstall, Stubley Hall stands, not more than twenty yards from the roadside. A much older hall than the present one must have stood here prior to the 13th century, for in 1322, and 1323, mention is made of Nicholas and John de Stubley (His. Whalley). It subsequently came into the possession of the Holt family, of Grislehurst and Castleton; a branch of the Holts, of Sale, Ashton, Cheshire. Some of this family fought in the Scottish wars, and also, in favour of the royal cause, at Edgehill, Newbury, Marston Moor, &c., and were named in Charles's projected order of the Royal Oak. There was a Judge Holt, of the Holts of Sale; and a James Holt, whose mother was co-heiress to Sir James de Sutton; he was killed on Flodden Field. Mary, the daughter of James Holt, the last of the family who resided at Castleton, in this parish, married Samuel, brother of the famous Humphrey Cheetham. The Castleton estate came into Humphrey's hands in 1744. The manor of Spotland was granted by Henry VIII. to Thomas Holt, who was knighted in Scotland by Edward, Earl of Hertford, in the thirty-sixth year of the reign of that king. The Holts were the principal landowners in the parish of Rochdale at the close of the sixteenth century. John Holt held the manor of Spotland, with its appurtenances; also fourscore messuages, three mills, one thousand acres of inclosed land, three hundred acres of meadow, one thousand acres of pasture, and forty acres of woods, in Hundersfield, Spotland, and Butterworth; besides a claim to hold of his majesty, as of his duchy of Lancaster, one third of the manor of Rochdale.

The arms of the Holts are described as "Argent on a band engrailed sable, three fleur-de-lys of the first. Crest, a spear head proper. Motto, 'Ut sanem vulnera.'" The present hall at Stubley was built by Robert Holt, about the year 1528. Dr. Whittaker notices this house, which is of considerable size, forming three sides of a square. It is now inhabited by several families; and much of the rich old carved oak, and other relics of its former importance, have been removed from the interior.

From the top of the slope near Stubley, we now saw the spire of Littleborough church, and the village itself, prettily situated at the head of the vale, and close to the foot of the hills which divide Lancashire and Yorkshire. On the top of Blackstone, and about half a mile to the south of "Joe Faulkner's,"—the well-known old sheltering spot for travellers over that bleak region,—we could now more distinctly see the streak of green which marks the line of the Roman road till it disappears from the summit of the Edge.

Featherstall is a little hamlet of comfortable cottages at the bottom of the brow in the high road near Stubley Hall, warmed by the "Rising Sun," and another, an old-fashioned public-house, apparently as old as the present Stubley Hall. The inhabitants are principally employed at the mills and collieries in the neighbourhood. The open space in the centre of the village is generally strewn with scattered hay, and the lights from the public-houses gleam forth into the watering troughs in front, as the traveller goes through at night. A rough old road leads out of the centre of the place, northward, over Calder Moor and the hills, towards Todmorden. From Featherstall, the approach to Littleborough is lined with mills, meadows, and tenter-fields, on the north side; and on the south, two or three green fields divide the highway from the railway, and a few yards on the other side of the railway the line of the Rochdale canal runs parallel with both. And thus these three roads run nearly close together past Littleborough, and all through the vale of Todmorden, up to Sowerby Bridge, a distance of twelve miles; and, for a considerable part of the way, the river forms a fourth companion to the three roads, the four together filling the entire bottom of the valley in some places; and, in addition to that, may be seen, in other parts, the old pack-horse roads leading down from the moorland steeps into the hollow. Carts, boats, railway trains, and sometimes pack-horses, seem to comment upon one another as they pass and re-pass, and form a continual and palpable lecture on

modes of transit, such as is not often met with in such distinct shape. Littleborough consists, principally, of one irregular street, winding over a slight elevation, and down to its centre near the railway station, at the watet-side, and thence across the bridge, up towards Blackstone Edge. It is a substantial, healthy-looking village, prettily situated in a romantic spot. There are many poor working people in the village, but there is hardly anything like dirt or squalor to be seen there, except, perhaps, a little of that migratory kind which is unavoidable in all great thoroughfares, and which remains here for a night, on its way, at a roadside receptacle which I noticed at the western end of the village, where I saw on a little board certain ominous hieroglyphics about "Loggins for travlurs." The lands in the valley round Littleborough have the appearance of fine meadow and pasture; and, taken with the still better cultivated grounds, and woods and gardens, about the mansions of the opulent people of the neighbourhood, the whole looks beautifully verdant, compared with the bleak hills which overlook the vale. The old Royal Oak Inn, in the middle of the village, is pointed out as a house which John Collier used to frequent, when he visited the neighbourhood, and where he fixed the scene of Tummus's misadventure in the inn, where he so unadvisedly "Eet like a Yorsharmon, and clear't th' stoo," after he had been to the justice with his dog, "Nip," and where the encounter took place between "Mezzilt Face" and "Wythen Kibbo:"—

Aw went in, an fund at two fat throddy folk wooant theer; an theyd'n some o'th warst fratchingst company at e'er eh saigh; for they'rn warrying, banning, and co'in one another "leawsy eawls," as thick as leet. Heawe'er, aw poo'd a cricket, an keawr't meh deawn i'th nook, o' side o'th hob. Aw'd no soyner done so, boh a feaw, seawer-lookt felley, with a wythen kibbo he had in his hont, slapt a sort ov a wither, mezzilt-face't mon, sich a thwang o'th skawp, at he varry reecht again with it, an deawn he coom o'th harstone, an his heeod i'th esshole. His scrunt wig feel off, an a-hontle o' whot corks feel into't, an brunt an frizzlt it so, at when he awst don it, an unlucky carron gen it a poo, an it slipt o'er his sow, an it lee like a hownbank on his shilders. Aw glendurt like a stickt tup, for fear ov a dust mysel', an crope fur into th' chimbley. Oytch body thowt at mezzil-face would mey a flittin on't, an dee in a crack; so some on um cried eawt, "a doctor, a doctor," whol others made'n th' londlort go saddle th' tit to fotch one. While this wur eh doin', some on um had leet ov a kin ov a doctor at wooant a bit off, an shew'd him th' mon o'th harstone. He laid howd on his arm—to feel his pulse, a geawse—an poo'd as if he'd sin deeoth poo'in' at th' tother arm, an wur resolv't o'er-poo him. After lookin' dawkinly-wise a bit, he geet fro his whirly booans, an said to um aw, "Whol his heart bhyet and his blood sarkilates, there's hopes, boh whon that stops, it's whoo-up with him i'faith." Mezzil-face hearin summot o' "whoo-up," started to his feet, flote noan, boh gran like a foomart-dog, an seet at t' black, swarffy tyke weh bwoth neaves, an wawtud him o'er into th' galker, full o' new drink, wortchin'. He begun o' pawsin' an peylin him into't so, at aw wur blendud together, snap. 'Sflesh, Meary; theaw'd ha' weet teh, to sin heaw th' gobbin wur awtert, when at tey pood'n him eawt; an what a hobthurst he look't weh aw that berm abeawt him. He kept

dryin' his een, boh he moot as weel ha' sowt um in his hinder-end, till th' londlady had made an heawer's labber on um at th' pump. When he coom in again, he glooart awvishly at mezzil-face, an mezzil-face glendurt as wrythenly at him again; boh noather warrit, nor thrap. So they seet um deawn, an then th' londlady coom in, an would mey um't pay for th' lumber at tey'd done hur. "Mey drink's war be a creawn," said hoo, "beside, there's two tumblers, three quiftin pots, an four pipes masht, an a whol papper o' bacco shed." This made um t' glendur at tone tother again; boh black tyke's passion wur coolt at th' pump, an th' wythen kibbo had quite'nt tother, so at teh camm'd little or noan—boh agreed t' pay, aw meeon; then seet'n um deawn, an wur friends again in a snift.

This house used to be a great resort on Saturday nights, ano fair days, and holidays, and it was often crammed with the villagers and their neighbours from the surrounding hill-sides; and no small addition from Rochdale and Todmorden. The windows were generally thrown open at such times; and, standing at some distance from the place, one might perhaps be able, in some degree, to sort the roar of wassailry going on inside. But if he wished to know what were the component parts of the wild medley of melodies, all gushing out from the house in one tremendous discord, he would have to draw under the windows, where he might hear:—

Our hounds they were staunch, and our horses were good
As ever broke cover, or dashed in a wood:
Tally-ho! hark forward, huzza; tally-ho!

Whilst, in another corner of the same room, a knot of strong-lunged roysterers joined, at the top of their voices, in the following chorus, beating time to it with fists and feet, and anything else which was heavy and handy:—

"Then heigho, heigho!
Sing heigho," cried he;
"Does my wife's first husband remember me?"
Fal de ral, de ral. de ral, de rido!

In another room he would probably hear "Boyne Water" trolled out in a loud voice:—

The horse were the first that ventured o'er;
The foot soon followed after:
But brave Duke Schomberg was no more,
At the crossing o' Boyne water.

Whilst another musical tippler, in an opposite corner, sang, for his own special amusement, the following quaint fragment:—

Owd shoon an' stockin's!
An' slippers at's made o' red leather!

In another quarter you might hear the fiddle playing the animated strains of the "Liverpool Hornpipe," or "The Devil rove his Shurt," while a lot of hearty youngsters, in wooden clogs, battered the hearthstone to the tune. In a large room above, the lights flared in the wind, as the lads and lasses flitted

to and fro in the "Haymaker," "Sir Roger de Coverley," or "The Triumph;" or threaded through a reel, and set till the whole house shook; whilst from other parts of the place you would be sure to hear, louder than all else, the clatter of pots, and hunting-cries; the thundering hurly-burly of drunken anger, or the crash of furniture, mingling with the boisterous tones of drunken fun. Whoever entered this house at such a time, in the hope of finding a quiet corner, where he could be still, and look round upon the curious mixture of quaint, rough character, would very likely find that he had planted himself in the retreat chosen by a drunken, maudlin fellow, who, with one eye closed, sat uttering, by fits, noisy salutations of affection to the pitcher of ale before him; or, with one leg over the other, his arms folded, and his head veering lazily with drunken langour, first to one side, and then to the other, poured forth a stream of unconnected jargon, in this style:—"Nea then; yollo chops! What's to do wi' thee? Arto findin' things eawt? Whether wilto have a pipe o' bacco or a bat o' th' ribs? Aw've summat i'th inside o' my box; but it looks like a brunt ratton, bi Guy! Help thysel', an' poo up, whol aw hearken tho thi catechism. . . Con te tell me what natur belungs to?—that's the poynt! Come, oppen eawt! Aw'm ready for tho. . . An' if thea's nought to say, turn thi yed; aw dunnut like to be stare't at wi' a bigger foo nor mysel'. . . Sup; an' gi' me houd! . . There's a lot o' nice, level lads i' this cote, isn't there? . . Aw'll tell tho what, owd dog; th' world swarms wi' foos, donn'd i' o' maks o' clooas; an' aw deawt it olez will do; for, as fast as th' owd uns dee'n off, there's fresh uns comes. An, by th' mass, th' latter lot dunnut mend thoose at's gwon; for o' at te're brawsen wi' wit. It'd mend it a bit iv oytch body'd wortch for their livin', an' do as they should'n do. Ay; thea may look as fause as to likes; but thae'rt one o'th rook; an' thae'll dee in a bit, as sure as thae'rt livin', owd craytur. Thae'rt to white abeawt th' ear-roots to carry a gray toppin whoam, aw deawt. Gray yure's heavy, mon; it brings 'em o' to th' floor. But thir't to leet for heavy wark, my lad. . . . Behave thysel'; an' fill thi bally when tho's a choance, for thea looks clemmed. Arto leet gi'n? 'Cose, i' tho art, thae'd betthur awter, or elze thea'll be lyin' o' thi back between two bworts, wi' thi meawth full o' sond; afore th' hawve o' thi time's up. . . Sitho at yon bletherin', keaw-lipped slotch, wi' th' quart in his hond! He's a breet-lookin'

brid, isn't he? Aw dar say thae thinks thysel' bwoth hon'somer an' fauser nor him. Thae may think so, but—aw know. Thae'rt no betthur nor porritch—i'tho're look't up; for o' at to's sich a pratty waiscut on. What breed arto? There's summat i' that. But, it meeons nought; yo're o' alike at th' bothom! There's ir Jammy; he's as big a wastril as ever stare't up a lone. He ax't me to lend him ov er lads, yesterday. 'Lend te a lad o' mine,' aw said, 'naw, bi' th' heart! Aw wouldn't lend te a dog to catch a ratton wi'!' . . . Hello! my ale's done!

'Then he doffed his shoon,
An he look't i'th o'n.'

Aw'll go toaurd ir Mally, aw think. Hey, Blossom! Beauty! Beawncer! Bluebell! For shame o' thysel', Bluebell! By, dogs; by! Yo-ho! Come back, yo thieves! Come back; aw tell yo!" And so on, for hours together.

Littleborough is the last village the traveller leaves on the Lancashire side of the "Edge;" and the old high road from Manchester to Leeds passes over the top of these moorland hills, gently ascending all the way from Littleborough, by a circuitous route, to the summit—nearly three miles. A substantial hostelrie stands upon the brow of the hill, called "The White House," and sometimes "Joe Faulkner's," from the name of an eccentric landlord who kept the house in the old coaching time. This house can be seen from the valleys on the Lancashire side for many miles. It was a celebrated baiting-place for the great stream of travellers which went over these hills, before the railway drew it through the vale of Todmorden. The division stone of the counties of York and Lancaster stands about half a mile beyond this old inn. Littleborough itself is prettily situated in the hollow of the valley, at the foot of this wild range of mountains, and at the entrance of the Todmorden valley. It is surrounded by scenery which is often highly picturesque. Dark moorlands, lofty and lonesome; woody cloughs; and green valleys, full of busy life; with picturesque lakes, and little streams which tumble from the hills. The village has many advantages of situation, both for pleasure and manufacture. Stone and coal, and good water, are abundant all around it; and it is fast thriving by the increase of woollen and cotton manufacture. It is still a great thoroughfare for Lancashire and Yorkshire; and a favourite resort for botanists, geologists, sportsmen, and, not unfrequently, invalids. Northward from the village, there are many romantic

cloughs, but, perhaps, the finest of these is the one called "Long Clough," at the head of which is a remarkably fine spring, called "Blue Pots Spring." The artificial lake of "Hollingworth" is about half a mile from the village, on the south side; and there is a beautiful walk leading up to its bank, through the shady clough called "Cleggswood." This lake, when full, is three miles round. It supplies the Rochdale canal, and is well stocked with fish. Its elevation places it far above the bustle of the valley below, where the highways and byeways, the iron-ways and water-ways, interweaving thickly about the scene, are alive with the traffic of the district. The valley is throng with the river, the railway, the canal, and excellent high roads; and a hardy and industrious population, which finds abundant employment at the woollen and cotton mills, in the coal mines and stone delphs, or on the dairy and sheep farms of this border region of South Lancashire. The shelvy banks of "Hollingworth" consist of irregular tiers and slopes of pasture, meadow, and moor lands. The latter are, in some directions, abrupt, lofty, and vast, especially on the eastern side, where the sterile mass of Blackstone Edge shuts out the view; whilst a wild brotherhood of heathery hills, belonging to the same range, wind about the scene in a semicircle, which stretches far away, out of sight, in the north-west. But the landscape upon the immediate borders of the lake is of a rural and serene character, though touched here and there with moor-land sterility; and there is hardly a thing in sight to remind a spectator that he is surrounded by the most populous manufacturing district in the world. But the distant rumble of train after train, thundering through the neighbouring valley, and the railway whistle, rising up clear over the green hill north of the water, are sufficient to dispel any reverie which the sight of the lake and its surrounding scenery may lead to. On holidays, in summer time, the green country around the margin of this water is animated by companies of visitors from the hill sides, and the villages and towns of the neighbouring valleys. A little steamer plies upon it; and boats may be hired at the Fisherman's Inn, and other places around the banks. The scattered farm-houses of the vicinity, and the two or three country inns on the borders of the lake, are merry with pleasure parties. In winter, the landscape about "Hollingworth" is wild and lonesome; and the water is sometimes so completely frozen over that a horse and light vehicle may be driven across it, from bank

to bank, a mile's distance. It is a favourite resort of skaters, from the surrounding districts; though the ice is often dangerously uneven in some places, by reason of strong springs, and other causes. Many accidents have happened through skating upon insecure parts in the ice of this water. Going home late one night in the depth of winter, to my residence by the side of this lake, I found the midnight scene dimly illumined in the distance by a gleam of lights upon the lake; and the sound of pick-axes breaking up the ice, fell with a startling significance upon the ear. Our dog, "Captain," did not come out to meet me, when I whistled, as usual; and I hurried, by a short cut over the fields and through the wood, towards the spot where the lights were visible. There I found a company of farmers and weavers, standing upon the bank, with one or two of the wealthy employers from the village of Littleborough, who had drags in their hands, and were giving directions to a number of workmen who were breaking a channel for the passage of a boat to a spot where the ice had broken in with the weight of three young men belonging to the neighbourhood. This melancholy midnight gathering were working by lantern-light, to recover the bodies from the water. I remained upon the spot until two of the corpses were brought to the bank, and removed in a cart to the farm-house where I resided, previous to being conveyed to their homes in the distant town, later on in the morning, and while it was yet dark. I shall never forget the appearance of those fresh-looking youths, as they lay stretched side by side, in their skating gear, upon a table, in the long passage which led up to my bed-chamber.

The margin of the lake is adorned with patches of wood in some places; and the hills stand around the scene in picturesque disorder. At certain seasons of the year, flocks of wild fowl may be seen resting upon its waters. There are other lakes farther up in the hills; but the position and beauty of Hollingworth make it a favourite with visitors to the district.

> When westling winds and slaughtering guns
> Bring autumn's pleasant weather,

the Littleborough inns are throng with sportsmen, equipped for the grouse shooting; for which sport the moors of the neighbourhood are famous. Littleborough has a modern look from the railway station, near to which the new church stands, on a

slight elevation, about the centre of the place, and upon the site of the old one. Yet, though the village has a modern appearance, everything known of its history shows that it is a settlement of considerable antiquity; perhaps, as early as the time of Agricola, the Roman.

The old chapel at Littleborough, which was a primitive building in appearance, was licensed for mass, by the Abbot of Whalley, A.D. 1476. It remained in its original architectural state until it became dangerously ruinous in some parts, and was taken down about thirty years ago, to make way for the present church. The *Gentleman's Magazine*, for 1844, p. 182, contains an interesting description of the new church.

In the immediate vicinity of Littleborough, there are several interesting old houses, now standing upon sites where families of importance in past times settled very early. Some of these families have become extinct in the male line; the property of others has changed hands, like Scholefield Hall, Stubley Hall, Lightowlers, and Windy Bank. Few of these old families have held together and flourished, through the mutations of time, like the family of Newall, of Town House, near Littleborough, respecting which I find the following passage in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, June, 1844, p. 593, which serves to elucidate the character and position of a large portion of the ancient landlords of the parish of Rochdale:—

> The family of Newall is one of those ancient families who have for centuries resided on their parental estate, but in the retirement of respectable life holding the rank of yeomanry, which, in former times, and particularly in the age when the Newalls first settled in Lancashire, formed no unimportant portion of society—sufficiently elevated beyond the humbler classes to preserve a tolerable degree of influence and authority amongst them; while they were sheltered in their retirement from those political storms which distracted the higher circles of the community, and which led to the ruin of many of the best families of the kingdom, and to the confiscation of their estates.

Burke's *Visitation of Seats and Arms* contains a long account of the Newalls, of Town House, Hare Hill, and Wellington Lodge, Littleborough, an influential family in this neighbourhood during several centuries past; and still owners and occupiers of their old estates, as well as extensive woollen manufacturers.

The following arms, illustrative of the connections of the Newall family, are placed, with others, in the window of Littleborough chapel:—

KYRKESHAGH, of Town House: Or, on a chief per pale gules and sable three bezants.

LITHOLRES, of Litholres: Vert, a lion rampant, or semé of calthraps sable.

NEWALL, of Town House: Quarterly, first and fourth, Per pale gules and azure, three covered cups within an orle or: second, Kyrshagh: third, Healey, Gules, four lozenges engrailed in bend ermine: fourth, Butterworth, Argent, a lion couchant azure, between four ducal coronets gules.

BUCKLEY, of Howarth Parva; a chevron between three bulls' heads caboshed argent; quartering Butterworth. (The Chadwicks of Healey quarter Buckley of Buckley. Coll. Arm.)

HOLT, of Stubley: Argent on a bend engrailed sable three fleurs-de-lis of the field. (Also quartered by the Chadwicks. Coll. Arm.)

BELFIELD, of Cleggswood: Ermine, on a chief qu. a label of five points ar.

Ten other shields contain the arms of the ancient families of the district, as Bamford of Shore, Ingham of Cleggswood, Halliwell of Pike House, &c., and those used by the bishop of the diocese, the clergy connected with the parish, and some of the gentry of the neighbourhood.

As we left Littleborough, I began, once more, to speculate upon the claims set up for it as having been a Roman station; but my thoughts had no firmer footing than the probabilities put forth by Dr. Whittaker, and some other writers, who have, perhaps, followed him. Yet, the fact that the silver arm of a small Roman statue of Victory, with an inscription thereon, was dug up in the neighbourhood some time ago, together with the direction of the Roman road as marked in the late ordnance map, and the visible remains of a small, triangular-shaped entrenchment, on each side of the road, on the summit of Blackstone Edge, seem to support the probabilities which gave rise to the opinion, and may yet enable the antiquarians of Lancashire to give us something more certain about the matter than I can pretend to.

Passing under the railway arch near the church, and leaving the woody glen of Cleggswood on the right hand, we began to ascend the hills by the winding road which crosses the canal, and leads through a little hamlet called "Th' Durn," consisting of an old substantial house or two by the roadside, and a compact body of plain cottages, with a foundry in the middle. "Th' Durn" is situated on one of the shelves of land which the high road crosses in the ascent of Blackstone Edge; and overlooks the vale in the direction of Todmorden. It is shaded on the south by a steep hill, clothed with fir, and stunted oaks. Over that hill-top, on the summit of a wild eminence, above the din and travel of mankind, stand three remarkable old folds, called "Th' Whittaker," "Th' Turner," and "Th' Sheep Bonk," like eagles' nests, overlooking, on the east, the heathery solitudes lying between there and Blackstone Edge, the silent domain of moor fowl and black-faced sheep; seldom trodden

by human feet, except those of a wandering gamekeeper, or a few sportsmen, in August. Looking forth from this natural observatory, about where "Th' Whittaker" stands, the view to westward takes in an extensive landscape. The vale of the Roch is under the eye in that direction, with its pretty sinuosities, its receding dells, and indescribable varieties of undulation; nearly surrounded by hills, of different height and aspect. Distance lends some "enchantment to the view," as the eye wanders over the array of nature spread out below—green dells, waving patches of wood, broad, pleasant pastures; the clear lake of "Hollingworth" rippling below; old farm-houses, scattered about the knolls and cloughs, by the side of brooklets that shine silverly in the distance; the blue smoke curling up distinctly from each little hamlet and village; mills, collieries, tenter-fields, and manifold evidences of the native industry and manufacturing vigour of the district. In these valleys, all nature seems to yield tribute to the energy of the inhabitants, and rural life and manufacture work into each other's hands with advantage. Standing on this spot, with these things spread out before me, I have been struck with the belief, that this unfavourable region for agriculture would not have been so well cultivated even as it is now, but for the manufacturing system. Far west, the eye rests upon the town of Rochdale, with its clusters of chimneys, and hovering canopy of smoke; the small square tower of its old church, and the steeples of St. Stephen's and St. James's, with the town-clad ridges of Wardleworth and Castleton, clearly seen, if the day be fine. On a still Sunday afternoon, in summer time, I have sat upon the hill-top at "Whittaker," listening to the distant sound of Rochdale bells, that notable peal of eight, the music of which I shall never forget; and which I would back for a trifle against any bells in England for sweetness. And, at such a time, as evening came on, when "lowing herds wind slowly o'er the lea," I have almost fancied that I could hear the Sunday chime of Rochdale Old Church, "My soul, praise the Lord," come floating up the vale, in the twilight, with a wonderful charm of peace and solemnity in the sound. Immediately above "Th' Durn," the high road leading up to Blackstone Edge rises again as we pass by the old public-house called "Th' Wet Rake," or "Weet Rake." This house stands at the foot of a steep path leading to "Windy Bank," an old

stone hall, once inhabited by an ancient family of the neighbourhood. Windy Bank stands upon the edge of a rocky eminence, rising almost perpendicularly from the road-side by which we had to go. There used to be a carter in Rochdale, known by the name of "Old Woggy," who upset his cart in the craggy road called "Windy Bonk Steele." He returned to his master in the town with the tidings. "Woggy" always stammered in his speech, but in this case he was worse than usual; and his looks told more than his tongue. His master watched in vain for "Woggy's" painful delivery, in the usual way; but tired at last, he said, "Sing it, mon!" when "Wog" immediately sang out, with a fluent voice,—

Aw've wauted wi' th' cart at th' Wyndy Bonk Steele,
An' aw've broken th' tone wheel.

As we wound round the foot of the rock on the top of which "Windy Bank" stands, we found the road rutty and uneven, being covered with the perishable sandstone from the hill, broken up and ploughed into slushy gutters, by stone-waggons from the quarries, thereabouts. Pike House, the seat of the old local family of Halliwell—one of whom endowed the Free School at Littleborough—stands near the north side of the road here; and, at a short distance behind, there is an interesting house, formerly of some importance, with a quaint fold attached, called "Lightowlers." Driving on close by the edge of the deep clough called "Sladen Hollow," a hundred yards more brought us to the "Moor Cock Inn," formerly a much more lively place than now, when this mountain road was the great thoroughfare between Lancashire and Yorkshire. The "Moor Cock" was the last house but one on the Lancashire side of Blackstone Edge. The house has a rude, wholesome look still, but is little frequented. Few folk go up that road now, except stone-getters, sand-knockers, shepherds, sportsmen, and a few curious wanderers. We agreed to leave the drag at the "Moor Cock," and walk up Blackstone Edge on foot. "Gray Bobby" was pleased with the prospect of a feed and a rest; for it is tough work upon these hill-sides. He seemed to look round with a thoughtful eye, and pricked his ears to the tread of the brisk young mountaineer—albeit he had a lame leg and a crutch—who came forth to lose his traces and lead him to the stable. As "Bobby" looked at the stable, I could almost imagine him saying to himself, "There's no place like home;" it looked so rough. In the house we found a few

hardy-looking men; brown-faced, broad-shouldered moor farmers or shepherds, apparently, who did a little weaving. Their sagacious dogs, lounged about the floor. Such men, in such places, generally receive strangers as if they were "fain to see aught at's wick." They happened to have a liberal newspaper among them, and free trade was the topic of their talk; as it was almost everywhere at that time. Their conversation showed, by its sensible earnestness, that there were men, even up there, who knew who paid for the great protection delusion. I have often been amused by the blunt, shrewd discourse of country people in the manufacturing districts, respecting the difference in the condition and feelings of the people in the reigns of "George o' owd George's," and his brother, "Bill o' George's," and the condition of the people now, in the reign of the "little woman at coom a-seein' us latly." In previous reigns, the tone of their loyalty might have been summed up in what "Jone o' Greenfelt" says of his wife, "Margit:"—

> Hoo's naut ogen th' king,
> But hoo likes a fair thing,
> An' hoo says hoo con tell when hoo's hurt.

I have heard them talk of kings, and statesmen, "wi' kindling fury i' their breasts;" and, in their "brews" and clubs, which meet for the spread of information, they discuss the merits of political men and measures, and "ferlie at the folk in Lunnon," in a shrewd, trenchant style, which would astonish some members of the collective wisdom of the nation, could they but conveniently overhear it. The people of Lancashire, generally, are industrious collectors of political information, from such sources as they can command. They possess great integrity of judgment, and independence of character, and cannot be long blinded to the difference between wise statesmen and political knaves. They are an honest and a decent people, and would be governed by such. They evince some sparks of perception of what is naturally due to themselves, as well as to their masters; and they only know how to be loyal to others who are loyal to themselves.

When the lame ostler had attended to his charge, he came into the house and sat down with the rest. Somehow, the conversation glided in the direction of Robert Burns, and we were exchanging quotations from his poems and songs, when

one of us came to a halt in reciting a passage. To our surprise, the young limper who had rubbed down "Grey Bobby," took up the broken thread, and finished the lines correctly, with good discretion, and evident relish. I fancied that we were having it all to ourselves; but the kind-hearted poet who "mourned the daisy's fate," had been at the "Moor Cock" before us, and touched a respondent chord in the heart of our ostler. I forget who it is that says, "It is the heart which makes the life;" but it is true, and it is the heart which sings in Robert Burns, and the heart will stir to the sound all the world over. How many political essays, and lectures, and election struggles, would it take to produce the humanising effect which the song, "A man's a man for a' that," has awakened? It would sound well in the British houses of parliament, sung in chorus, occasionally, between the speeches.

After resting ourselves about three-quarters of an hour in the Moor Cock, we started up the hill-side, to a point of the road a little past the toll-bar and the old oil-mill in the hollow, at the right hand. Here we struck across the moor, now wading through the heather, now leaping over ruts and holes, where blocks of stone had been got out; then squashing through a patch of mossy swamp, and sinking into the wet turf at every step, till we reached the moss-covered pavement, which the ordnance surveyors have called a "Roman road." It is entirely out of any way of travel. A clearly-defined and regular line of road of about forty feet wide, and which we traced and walked upon up to the summit of the Edge, and down the Yorkshire side, a distance of nearly two miles from our starting place upon the track. We could distinguish it clearly more than a mile beyond the place we stopped at, to a point where it crossed the road at Ripponden, and over the moor beyond, in a north-westerly direction, preserving the same general features as it exhibited in those parts where it was naked to the eye. Here and there, we met with a hole in the road, where the stones of the pavement had been taken out and carried away. While we were resting on a bank at this old road-side, one of the keepers of the moor came up with his dogs, and begged that we would be careful not to use any lights whilst upon the moor, for fear of setting fire to the heath, which was inflammably-dry. I took occasion to ask him what was the name of the path we were upon. He said he did not know, but he had always heard it called "Th' Roman

Road." At a commanding point, where this old pavement reaches the edge of "Blackstone," from the Lancashire side, the rocky borders of the road rise equally and abruptly, in two slight elevations, opposite each other, upon which we found certain weather-worn blocks of stone, half buried in the growth of the moor. There was a similarity in the general appearance, and a certain kind of order visible, in the arrangement of these remains, which looked not unlikely to be the relics of some heavy ancient masonry, once standing upon these elevations; and at the spot which is marked, is the line of the "Roman Road," in the ordnance maps, as an "Entrenchment."

The view along the summits of the vast moors, from any of the higher parts of this mountain barrier between the two counties of Lancaster and York, looks primevally-wild and grand, towards the north and south; where dark masses of solitude stretch away as far as the eye can see. In every other direction, the landscape takes in some cultivated land upon the hill-sides, and the bustle and beauty of many a green vale, lying low down among these sombre mountains; with many a picturesque and cultivated dingle, and green ravine, higher up in the hills, in spots where farm-houses have stood for centuries; sometimes with quaint groups of cottages gathered round them, and clumps of trees spreading about, shading the currents of moorland rivulets, as they leap down from the hills. In the valleys, the river winding through green meadows; mansions and mills, villages and churches, and scattered cottages, whose little windows wink cheerfully through their screen of leaves—

> Old farms remote, and far apart, with intervening space
> Of black'ning rock, and barren down, and pasture's pleasant face;
> The white and winding road, that crept through village, glade, and glen,
> And o'er the dreary moorlands, far beyond the homes of men.

Standing upon these proud and rugged desolations, which look down upon the changeful life of man in the valleys at their feet, with such an air of strength and serenity, whilst the toiling swarms of Lancashire and Yorkshire are scattered over the landscape beyond, in populous hives—the contrast is peculiarly strong; and I have wondered whether these old hills, which have seen the painted Celt tracking his prey through the woods and marshes below, and worshipping "in the eye of light," among wild fanes of rock, upon these mountain wildernesses—which have heard the tread of the legions of old Rome; and have watched the brave Saxon, swinging his axe among the

forest trees, and, with patient labour, slowly making these valleys into green and homely pasturages; and which still behold the iron horses of modern days, rushing along the valley every hour, snorting fire and steam: I have wondered whether the hills, at whose feet so many generations of brave men have come and gone, like swathes of grass, might not yet again see these native valleys of mine as desolate and stirless as themselves. These moorland hills, the bleak companions of mist, and cloud, and tempest, rise up one after another upon the scene, till they grow dim on the distant edge of the sky. Lying upon my back, among the heather, I looked along the surface of the moors; and I shall long remember the peculiar loneliness of the landscape seen in that way. Nothing was in sight but a wild infinity of moors and mountain tops, succeeding each other, like heaving waves, of varied form. Not a sign of life was visible over all the scene, except immediately around us, where, now and then, a black-faced sheep lifted its head above the heather, and stared, with a mingled expression of wonder and fear, at the new intruders upon its solitary pasturage. Occasionally, a predatory bird might be seen upon these hills, flitting across the lone expanse—an highwayman of the skies; and, here and there, the moor-fowl sprang up from the cover, in whirring flight, and with that wild clucking cry, which, in the stillness of the scene, came upon the ears with a clearness that made the solitude more evident to the senses. A rude shepherd's hut, too, could be seen sheltering near a cluster of crags upon the hill-side, and hardly distinguishable from the heathery mounds, which lay scattered over the surface of the moor. But, in the distance, all seemed one wilderness of untrodden sterility—as silent as death. The sky was cloudless whilst we wandered upon those barren heights: and the blue dome looked down, grandly-calm, upon the landscape, which was covered with a glorious sunshine.

> No stir of air was there;
> Not so much life as on a summer day
> Robs not one light seed from the feathered grass,
> But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest

Heaven and earth were two magnificent stillnesses, which appeared to gaze serenely and steadily at each other, with the calm dignity and perfect understanding of ancient friends, whose affinities can never be unsettled, except by the fiat

of Him who first established them. Looking horizontally along the moors, in this manner, nothing was visible of those picturesque creases, which lie deep between these mountain ridges, and teem with the industrious multitudes of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

These hills form part of a continuous range, running across the island, in different elevations, and familiarly known as the "Backbone of England." Looking southward and south-east, in the direction of the rocky waste called "Stanedge,"—which is crossed by the high road from Manchester to Huddersfield—and "Buckstones," which, according to local tradition, was formerly an highwayman's haunt,—the whole country is one moorland wild; and the romantic hills of Saddleworth, with the dim summits of the Derbyshire mountains, bound the view. Northward, the landscape has the same general appearance. In this direction, Studley Pike lately occupied the summit of a lofty moorland, overlooking the valley between Hebden Bridge and the town of Todmorden; which is part of a district famous for its comely breed of people, and for the charms of its scenery. Studley Pike was a tall stone tower, erected to commemorate the restoration of peace, at the end of our wars with Napoleon. Singularly, it came thundering to the ground on the day of the declaration of war against Russia.

On the west, the valley of the Roch, with its towns and villages, stretches away out from this group of hills. Littleborough nestles immediately at the foot of the mountain; and the eye wanders along the vale, from hamlet to hamlet, till it reaches the towns of Rochdale, Bury, Heywood, Middleton, and the smoky canopy of Manchester in the distance. On a favourable day, many other large and more distant Lancashire towns may be seen. On the east, or Yorkshire side, looking towards Halifax, the hills appear to be endless. The valleys are smaller and more numerous, often lying in narrow gorges and woody ravines between the hills, hardly discernable from the distance. The mountain sides have a more cultivated look, and hovering halos of smoke, rising up from the mountain hollows, with, sometimes, the tops of factory chimneys peering out from the vales, show where villages like Ripponden and Sowerby are situated. On the distant edge of the horizon, a grey cloud hanging steadily beyond the green hill, called "King Cross" marks the locality

of the town of Halifax. Green plots of cultivated land are creeping up the steep moors; and comfortable farm-houses, with folds of cottages, built of the stone of the district, are strewn about the lesser hills, giving life and beauty to the scene.

For native men, the moors of this neighbourhood, as well as the country seen from them, contain many objects of interest. The hills standing irregularly around; the rivers and streams; the lakes and pools below, and in the fissures of the mountains—we knew their names. The lakes, or reservoirs, about Blackstone Edge, form remarkable features in its scenery. One of these, "Blackstone Edge Reservoir," takes its name from the mountain upon whose summit it fills an extensive hollow. This lake is upwards of two miles, close by the water's edge. The scenery around it is a table-land, covered with heather, and rocks, and turfy swamps. The other two, "White Lees" and "Hollingworth," lie lower, about half way down the moors: "White Lees" in a retired little glen, about a mile north-west of the "White House," on the top of Blackstone Edge; and "Hollingworth," the largest and most picturesque of the three, is situated about two miles south-west of the same spot. Close by the side of the high road from Lancashire, over these hills into Yorkshire, this old hostelry, known as "Th' White house," is situated near the top of Blackstone Edge, looking towards Lancashire. The division-stone of the two counties stands by the road-side, and about half a mile eastward of this public-house. The northern bank of the road, upon which the division-stone stands, shuts out from view the lake called "Blackstone Edge Reservoir"—a scene which "skylark never warbles o'er." A solitary cart-road leads off the road, at the corner of the reservoir, and, crossing the moor in a north-easterly direction, goes down into a picturesque spot, called "Crag Valley," or "The Vale of Turvin," for it is known by both names. This valley winds through the heart of the moors, nearly four miles, emptying itself at Mytholmroyd, in the vale of Todmorden. Fifty years ago, "Crag Valley" was an unfrequented region, little known, and much feared. Now there are thriving clusters of population in it; and pretty homesteads, in isolated situations, about the sides of the clough. Manufacture has crept up the stream. "Turvin" is becoming a resort of ramblers from the border towns and villages of the two counties, on account of the picturesque wildness of its

scenery. In some places the stream dashes through deep gorges of rock, overhung with wood; peeping through which, one might be startled by sight of a precipitous steep, shrouded with trees, and the foaming water rushing wildly below over its fantastic channel. There are several mills in the length of the valley now; and, in level holms, down in the hollow, the land is beautifully green. The vale is prettily wooded in many parts; but the barren hills overlook the whole length of Turvin. In former times, the clough was notable among the people of the surrounding districts, as a rendezvous of coiners and robbers; and the phrase "a Turvin shilling," grew out of the dexterity of these outlaws, who are said to have lurked a long time in the seclusion of this moorland glen.

Approaching Turvin by the rough road across the moor, from the top of Blackstone Edge, it leads into a deep corner of the valley, in which stands the church of "St. John's in the Wilderness," built a few years ago, for the behoof of the inhabitants of the neighbouring moors, and for a little community of factory people in this remote nook of the earth.

Upon the summit of one of the neighbouring mountains, there is a great platform of desolation, distinguished, even among this stony waste, as "The Wilderness;" and I think that whoever has visited the spot will be inclined to say that the roughest prophet that ever brooded over his visions in solitary places of the earth, could not well wish for a wilder Patmos than this moor-top. On the right hand of the public-house, near St. John's Church, several rough roads lead in different directions. The centre one goes up through a thick wood which clothes the mountain side, and on by winding routes to this "cloud-capped" wilderness. On a distant part of this bleak tract stand two remarkable Druidical remains, called "Th' Alder Stones," or the Altar Stones,"—sombre masses of rock, upon which the Druid priests of our island performed their sacrificial rites, before the wild Celts of the district. The position and formation of these stones, which have each a sloping top, with a hollow in the middle, and a channel thence downward, seem to confirm the character attributed to them.

Returning from "St. John's in the Wilderness," towards Blackstone Edge, a quaint stone building, called "Crag Hall," occupies a shady situation upon the hill-side, at the right hand of the vale, and at the edge of the wild tract called "Erringdale Moor."

This ancient hall contains many specimens of carved oak furniture, which have been preserved with the building, from the time of its old owners. A few years ago, the keeper of Erringdale moor dwelt in it, and kept the place in trim as a lodge, for the entertainment of the owners of the moor, and their sporting friends, in the grouse season.

Between the moor-side on which "Crag Hall" is situated, and the road up to the top of Blackstone Edge, a moorland stream runs along its rocky channel, in the deep gut of the hills. I remember that many years ago I wandered for hours, one summer day, up this lonely water, in company with a young friend of mine. In the course of our ramble upon the banks of the stream, little dreaming of any vestiges of human creation in that region, we came almost upon the roof of a cottage, rudely, but firmly built of stone. We descended the bank by a sloping path, leading to the door. There was no smoke, no stir nor sound, either inside or out; but, through the clean windows, we saw a pair of hand-looms, with an unfinished piece upon them. We knocked repeatedly, hoping to obtain some refreshment after our stroll; but there was no answer; and just as we were about to leave the lonely tenement, and take our way homewards—for the twilight was coming on, and we had nearly ten miles to go—we heard the sound of a pair of clogs in the inside of the cottage; and the door was opened by a tall, strong man, apparently about thirty-five years of age. His clear-complexioned face was full of frankness and simplicity. His head was large and well-formed, and covered with bristling brown hair, cut short. Yawning, and stretching his arms out, he accosted us at once—as if we were old friends, for whom he had been looking some time—with, "Well, heaw are yo, to-day?" We asked him for a drink of water. He invited us in, and set two chairs for us in a little kitchen, where the furniture was rudely-simple and sound, and everything in good order, and cleaned to its height. He brought forth pitchers full of buttermilk, plenty of thick oat-cakes, and the sweet butter for which these hills are famous; and we feasted. The cool of the evening was coming on, and there was no fire in his grate; so he fetched a great armful of dry heather from an inner room, and, cramming it into the fire-place, put a light to it. Up blazed the inflammable eilding, with a crackling sound, making the room look cheerful as himself. A few books lay upon

the window-sill, which we asked leave to look at. He handed them to us, commenting on them, in a shrewd and simple way, as he did so. They were chiefly books on mathematics, a science which he began to discourse upon with considerable enthusiasm. Now, my young companion happened to have a passion for that science; and he no sooner discovered this affinity between himself and our host, than to it they went pell-mell, with books and chalk, upon the clean flags; and I was bowled out of the conversation at once. Leaving them to their problems, and circles, and triangles, I walked out upon the moor; and sitting upon a knoll above the house, wrote a little rhyme in my note-book, which some years after appeared in the corner of a Manchester newspaper. When I returned they were still at it, ding-dong, about something or another in differential calculus; and I had great difficulty in impressing upon the mind of my companion the important area lying between us and our homes. This lonely mathematician, it seemed, was a bachelor, and he got his living partly by weaving, and partly by watching the moor, for the owners; and as I looked upon him I almost envied the man his strong frame, his sound judgment, his happy unsophisticated mind, and his serene and simple way of life. He walked over the moor with us nearly two miles, without hat, conversing about his books, and the lonely manner of his life, with which he appeared to be perfectly contented. At our parting, he pressed us to come over the moors again the first opportunity, and spend a day with him at his cottage. I have hardly ever met with another man who seemed so strong and sound in body; and so frank, and sensible, and simple-hearted, as this mathematical eremite of the mountains. That enthusiastic attachment to science, which so strongly distinguishes him in my remembrance, is a common characteristic of the native working-people of Lancashire, among whom, in proportion to the population, there is an extraordinary number of well-read and practised mechanics, botanists, musicians, and mathematicians; and the booksellers in the towns of the county, know that any standard works upon these subjects, and some upon divinity, are sure to find a large and ready sale among the operative classes.

We wore the afternoon far away in rambling about the high and open part of Blackstone Edge, between the group of rocks called "Robin Hood's Bed," and the solitary inn called the "White-House," upon the Yorkshire road. Wading through

fern and heather, and turfy swamps; climbing rocks, and jumping over deep gutters and lodgments of peaty water, had made us so hungry and weary, that we made the best of our way to this inn, while the sun was yet up above the hills. Here, the appetite we had awakened was amply satisfied; and we refreshed, and rested ourselves a while, conversing about the country around us, and exchanging anecdotes of its remarkable local characters, and reminiscences of our past adventures in the neighbourhood. Many of these related to "Old Joe," the quaint gamekeeper, at Hollingworth, a kind of local "Leather Stocking," who has many a time rowed us about the lake in his fishing-boat.

When we came out of the inn, the sun had gone down upon the opposite side of the scene. Night's shadows were climbing the broad steeps; but the summit-lines of the hills still showed in clear relief, against the western sky, where the sunset's glory lingered. In every other direction, the skirts of the landscape were fading from view. Rochdale town, with its church tower and stacks of tall chimneys, had disappeared in the distance. The mountainous wastes stretching away on the north, south, and east, were melting into indistinct masses; and, below the hills, quiet evening's dreamy shades were falling softly down, and folding away for the night the hamleted valleys between Blackstone Edge and the boundary of the scene. Day's curtains were closing to; the watchers of night were beginning their golden vigil; and all the air seemed thick with dreams. We descended from the moor-top by a steep path, which diverges, on the right-hand side of the highway, a little below the "White House," and cuts off a mile of the distance between that point and the "Moor Cock," where we had left "Grey Bobby" and the "Whitechapel." Far down, from scattered cots and folds, little lights were beginning to glimmer. That frontlet jewel of mild evening's forehead—"the star that bids the shepherd fold"—was glowing above us, and, here and there, twinklings of golden fire were stealing out from the blue expanse. As we picked our way down the moor, the stillness of the tract around us seemed to deepen as the light declined; and there was no distinguishable sound in the neighbourhood of our path, except the silvery tricklings of indiscernable rills. From the farms below, the far-off bark of dogs and lowing of cattle came floating up, mingled with the subdued rush and rattle of railway trains,

rushing along the valley. Half an hour's walk down the hill brought us back to the "Moor Cock." Limper, the ostler, got "Grey Bobby" from the stable, and put him into the harness. Out came the folk of the house, to see us off. Our frisky tit treated us to another romp; after which we drove down the road, in the gloaming, and on through Littleborough and Smallbridge, to Rochdale, by the light of the stars.

The Town of Heywood and its Neighbourhood.

Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy.

—WORDSWORTH

ONE Saturday afternoon, about midsummer, I was invited by a friend to spend a day at his house, in the green outskirts of Heywood. The town has a monotonous, cotton-spinning look; yet, it is surrounded by a pleasant country, and has some scenery of a picturesque description in its immediate neighbourhood. Several weeks previous to this invitation had been spent by me wholly amongst the bustle of our "cotton metropolis," and, during that time, I had often thought how sweetly summer was murmuring with its "leafy lips" beyond the town, almost unseen by me except when I took a ride to a certain suburb, and wandered an hour or two in a scene upon which the season seemed to smile almost in vain, and where the unsatisfactory verdure was broken up by daub-holes and rows of half-built cottages, and the air mixed with the aroma of brick-kilns and melting lime. Sometimes, too, I stole down into the market-place, on a Saturday morning, to smell at the flowers and buy a "posy" for my button-hole. It reminded me of the time when I used to forage about my native hedges, for bunches of the wild rose and branches of white-blossomed thorn. But now, as the rosy time of the year grew towards its height, I began to hanker after those moors and noiseless glens of Lancashire, where, even yet, nature seems to have it all her own way. I longed for the quiet valleys and their murmuring waters; the rustling trees; and the cloudless summer sky seen through fringed openings in the wildwood's leafy screen. Somebody says, that "we always find better men

in action than in repose;" and though there are contemplative spirits who instinctively shun the din of towns, and, turning to the tranquil seclusions of nature, read a lofty significance in its infinite forms and moods of beauty, yet, the grand battle of life lies where men are clustered. Great men can live greatly anywhere; but ordinary people must be content to snatch at any means likely to improve or relieve their lot; and it will do any care-worn citizen good to "consider the lilies of the field" a little, now and then. Country folk come to town to relieve the monotony of their lives; and town's folk go to the country for refreshment and repose. To each the change may be beneficial—at least I thought so; and, as light as leaf upon tree, I hailed my journey; for none of Robin Hood's men ever went to the greenwood with more pleasure than I.

It was nearly three when we passed the Old Church, on our way to the station. The college lads, in their quaint blue suits, and flat woollen caps, were frolicking about the quadrangle of that ancient edifice which helps to keep alive the name of Humphrey Chetham. The omnibuses were rushing by, with full loads. I said "full loads;" but there are omnibuses running out of Manchester, which I never knew to be so full that they would not "just hold another." But on we went, talking about anything which was uppermost; and in a few minutes we were seated in the train, and darting over the tops of that miserable jungle known by the name of "Angel Meadow." The railway runs close by a little hopeful oasis in this moral desert—the "Ragged School," at the end of Ashley Lane; and, from the carriage window, we could see "Charter-street"—that notable den of Manchester outcasts. These two significant neighbours—"Charter-street" and the "Ragged School"—comment eloquently upon one another. Here, all is mental and moral malaria, and the revelry of the place sounds like a forlorn cry for help. There the same human elements are trained, by a little timely culture, towards honour and usefulness. Any man, with an unsophisticated mind, looking upon the two, might be allowed to say, "Why not do enough of *this* to cure *that?*" On the brow of Red Bank, the tower and gables of St. Chad's Church overlook the swarming hive which fills the valley of the Irk; and which presents a fine field for those who desire to spread the gospel among the heathen, and enfranchise the slave. And if it be true that the poor are "the riches of the

church of Christ," there is an inheritance there worth looking after by any church which claims the title. Up rose a grove of tall chimneys from the streets lining the banks of the little slutchy stream, that creeps through the hollow, slow and slab, towards its confluence with the Irwell; where it washes the base of the rocks upon which, five hundred years ago, stood the "Baron's Hall," or manor house of the old lords of Manchester. On the same spot, soon after the erection of the Collegiate Church, that quaint quadrangular edifice was built as a residence for the warden and fellows, which afterwards became, in the turns of fortune, a mansion of the Earls of Derby, a garrison, a prison, an hospital, and a college. By the time we had taken a few reluctant sniffs of the curiously-compounded air of that melancholy waste, we began to ascend the incline, and lost sight of the Irk, with its factories, dyehouses, brick-fields, tan-pits, and gas-works; and the unhappy mixture of stench, squalor, smoke, hard work, ignorance, and sin, on its borders; and, after a short stoppage at Miles Platting, our eyes were wandering over the summer fields. Nature was drest in her richest robes; and every green thing looked lush with beauty. As we looked abroad on this wide array, it was delightful to see the sprouting honeysuckle, and the peace-breathing palm; and there, too, creeping about the hedges, was that old acquaintance of life's morning, the bramble, which will be putting forth "its small white rose" about the time that country folk begin to house their hay; and when village lads in Lancashire are gathering gear to decorate their rush-carts with. Clustering primroses were there; and the celandine, with burnished leaves of gold; and wild violets, prancked with gay colours; with troops of other wild flowers, some full in view, others dimly seen as we swept on;—a world of floral beauty thickly embroidering the green mantle of the landscape, though beyond the range of discriminating vision; but clear to the eye of imagination, which assured us that these stars of the earth were making their old haunts beautiful again. The buttercup was in the fields, holding its pale gold chalice up to catch the evening dews. Here and there grew a tuft of slender-stemmed lilies, graceful and chaste; and then a sweep of blue-bells, tinging the hedge-sides and the moist slopes under the trees with their azure hue—as blue as a patch of sky—and swinging the incense from their pendent petals into the sauntering summer wind.

Then came the tall foxglove, and bushes of the golden-blossomed furze, covered with gleaming spears, upon the banks of the line. Oh, refulgent summer! Time of blossoms and honey-dews; and flowers of every colour! Thy lush fields are rich with clover and herb-grass! Thy daylights glow with glory; thy twilights are full of dreamy sights and sounds; and the sweetest odours of the year perfume the air, when

> The butterfly flits from the flowering tree;
> And the cowslip and blue-bell are bent by the bee!

The throstle sang loud and clear in the trees and dells near the line, as we rolled along; and the blithe "layrock" made the air tremble, between heaven and the green meadows, with his thrilling lyric. That tall, white flower, which country folk call "posset," spread out its curdy top among the elegant summer grasses, quietly swaying to and fro with the wind. And then the daisy was there! There is no flower so well becomes the hand of a child as the daisy does! That little "crimson-tippet" companion of the lark, immortalised in the poet's loving wail! Tiny jewel of the fields of England; favourite of the child and of the bard! Daisies lay like snow upon the green landscape; and the hedges were white with the scented blossom of the thorn. To eyes a little tired of the city's hives of brick—

> Where stoop the sons of care,
> O'er plains of mischief, till their souls turn grey—

it was refreshing to peer about over the beautiful summer expanse, towards the blue hills rising on the edge of the horizon, solemn and serene.

My own impression of the natural charms of this part of Lancashire is, perhaps, a little warmer and more accepting than that of an unbiassed stranger would be; for the wheels are beautiful which roll me towards the country where I first pulled the wild flowers and listened to the lark. In this district, there are none of those rich depths of soil which, with little labour and tilth, burst forth in full crops of grain. But the land is mostly clothed with pastoral verdure; and the farming is almost entirely of the dairy kind. It is a country of green hills and vales, and clusters of dusky mills, surrounded by industrial life; and, except on the high moorlands, there is very little land now, even of the old mosses and morasses, which is not inclosed, and in progress of cultivation. The scenery has features of beauty

peculiar to itself. It consists of a succession of ever-varying undulations, full of sequestered cloughs, and dingles, and shady corners; threaded by many a little meandering stream, which looks up at the skies from its green hollow; and which

> Changes oft its varied lapse,
> And ever as it winds, enchantment follows,
> And new beauties rise.

Travellers from the midland and southern counties of England often notice the scarcity of trees in this quarter. The native woods were chiefly oak, ash, birch, beech, and yew—very useful timbers. But when the time came that Lancashire had to strip some of its old customs and ornaments, for the fulfilment of its manufacturing destiny, every useful thing upon the soil was seized, and applied to the purposes of the new time. The land itself began to be wanted for other ends than to grow trees upon. And then, when old landlords happened to be pressed for money, the timber of their estates—daily becoming more valuable for manufacturing necessities—sometimes presented the readiest way of raising it. Their lands often followed in the same track. And now, the landscape looks bald. Trees are scanty and small, except at a few such places as Hopwood Hall, and Chadderton Hall; and a few isolated clumps, like that which crests the top of "Tandle Hills." In that part of this district which lies between "Boggart Ho' Clough," near the village of Blackley, on the west, the town of Middleton, on the east, and the Manchester and Leeds railway line, on the south, there is a wide platform of level land, called "Th' White Moss." It stands above the surrounding country; and is quite removed from any of the great highways of the neighbourhood, which, nevertheless, wind near to the borders of this secluded moss, with their restless streams of business. In former days, this tract has been a densely-wooded wild; and, even within these twenty years last past, it was one great marsh, in whose peaty swamps the relics of ancient woods lay buried. Since that time, nearly two hundred acres of the moss have been brought into cultivation; and it is said that this part of it now produces as fine crops as any land in the neighbourhood. In turning up the bog, enormous roots and branches of trees, principally oaks, are often met with. Very fine oaks, beeches, firs, and sometimes yew trees, of a size very seldom met with in this part of Lancashire in these days, have frequently been found

embedded in this morass, at a depth of five or six feet. Samuel Bamford, in his description of the "White Moss," says: "The stems and huge branches of trees were often laid bare by the diggers, in cultivating it. Nearly all the trees have been found lying from west to east, or from west to south. They consist of oaks, beeches, alders, and one or two fine yews. The roots of many of them are matted and gnarled, presenting interesting subjects for reflection on the state of this region in unrecorded ages. Some of these trees are in part charred when found. One large oak, lying on the north-west side of the moss, has been traced to fifteen yards in length, and is twelve feet round." This moss was one of those lonely places to which the people of these districts found it necessary to retreat, in order to hold their political meetings in safety, during that eventful period of Lancashire history which fell between the years 1815 and 1821. It was a time of great suffering and danger in these parts. The working people were often driven into riot and disorder by the desperation of extreme distress; which disorder was often increased by the discreditable espionage and ruthless severities employed to crush political discussion among the populace. Of the gallant band of reformers which led the van of the popular struggle, many a humble and previously-unnoted pioneer of liberty has left an heroic mark upon the history of that time. Some of these are still living; others have been many a year laid in their graves; but their memories will long be cherished among a people who know how to esteem men who sincerely love freedom, and are able to do and to suffer for it, in a brave spirit.

In this active arena of industrialism, there are many places of interest: old halls and churches; quaint relics of ancient hamlets, hidden by the overgrowth of modern factory villages; immense mills, and costly mansions, often belonging to men who were poor lads a few years ago, wearing wooden clogs, and carrying woollen pieces home from the loom, upon their shoulders. As we cross the valley beyond the station, the little old parish church of Middleton stands in sight, on the top of a green eminence, about a mile north from the line. In the interior of this old fane still hang, against the southern wall, the standard and armour of Sir Richard Assheton, which he dedicated to St. Leonard of Middleton, on returning from Flodden Field, where he greatly distinguished himself, taking prisoner Sir John Foreman, serjeant-porter to James the Sixth of Scotland, and

Alexander Barrett, high sheriff of Aberdeen; and capturing the sword of the standard-bearer of the Scottish king. He led to the battle a brave array of Lancashire archers, the flower of his tenantry. At the western base of the hill upon which the church of St. Leonard is situated, two large cotton factories now stand, close to the spot which, even so late as the year 1845, was occupied by the picturesque old hall of the Asshetons, lords of Middleton. The new gas-works of the town fills part of the space once covered with its gardens. Middleton lies principally in the heart of a pleasant vale, with some relics of its ancient quaintness remaining, such as the antique wood-and-plaster inn, called the "Boar's Head," in the hollow, in front of the parish church. The manor of Middleton anciently belonged to the honour of Clithero, and was held by the Lacies, Earls of Lincoln. In the reign of Henry III., the heir of Robert de Middleton held a knight's fee in Middleton, of the fee of Edmund or Edward, Earl of Lincoln, who held it of the Earls of Ferrars, the king's tenant in capite. And Baines, in his history of Lancashire, further says:—

In 3 Edward II., the manor of Middleton is found in the inquisition post-mortem of Henry de Lacy, amongst the fees belonging to the manor of Tottington, held by service of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster. With Henry, Earl of Lincoln, this branch of the Lacys passed away; and their possessions in this country, with his daughter and heiress, devolved upon Thomas Plantagenet, Earl of Lancaster. The heirs of Robti (Robert) de Middleton possessed lands in *Midelton*, by military service, in the reign of Henry the Third, 1216-1272. At a later period, the manor was possessed by Richard Barton, Esq.; the first of this family who is recorded in connection with Middleton was living in the reign of Henry the Fourth, 1410. He died without surviving issue, and the manor passed to the heirs of his brother, John Barton, Esq., whose daughter Margaret having married Ralph Assheton, Esq., a son of Sir John Assheton, Knt., of Ashton-under-Lyne, he became Lord of Middleton in her right, in the seventeenth of Henry the Sixth, 1438, and was the same year appointed a page of honour to that king. He was knight-marshal of England, lieutenant of the Tower of London, and sheriff of Yorkshire, 1473-1474. He attended the Duke of Gloucester at the battle of Haldon, or Hutton Field, Scotland, in order to recover Berwick, and was created a knight *banneret* on the field for his gallant services, 1483. On the succession of Richard the Third to the crown, he created Sir Ralph vice-constable of England, by letters patent, 1483.

Thus began the first connection of the town of Middleton with that powerful Lancashire family, the Asshetons, of Ashton-under-Lyne, in the person of the famous "Black Lad," respecting whom Dr. Hibbert says, in his historical work upon Ashton-under-Lyne, as follows:—

It appears that Ralph Assheton became, by his alliance with a rich heiress, the lord of a neighbouring manor, named Middleton, and soon afterwards received the honour of knighthood, being at the same time entrusted with the office of vice-chancellor, and, it is added, of lieutenant of the Tower. Invested with such authority, he committed violent excesses in this part of the kingdom. In retaining also for life the privilege of *guld riding*, he, on a certain day in the spring, made his appearance in this manner, clad in black armour (whence his name of the *Black Lad*),

mounted on a charger, and attended by a numerous train of his followers, in order to levy the penalty arising from neglect of clearing the land from *carr gulds*. The interference of so powerful a knight, belonging to another lordship, could not but be regarded by the tenants of Assheton as a tyrannical intrusion of a stranger, and the name of the *Black Lad* is at present regarded with no other sentiment than that of horror. Tradition has, indeed, still perpetuated the prayer that was fervently ejaculated for a deliverance from his tyranny:—

Sweet Jesu, for thy mercy's sake,
And for thy bitter passion,
Save us from the axe of the Tower,
And from Sir Ralph of Assheton.

Happily, with the death of this terrible guld-rider of Assheton, the custom was abolished, but the sum of five shillings is still reserved from the estate, for the purpose of commemorating it by an annual ceremony. Ralph Assheton, of Middleton, was an energetic adherent to the parliamentary cause during the civil wars. On the 24th September, 1642, about one hundred and fifty of his tenants, in complete arms, joined the forces of Manchester, in opposition to the royalists. He commanded the parliamentary troops at the siege of Warrington. He was engaged at the siege of Lathom House, and led the Middleton Clubmen at the siege of Bolton-le-Moors. In 1648 he was a major-general, and commanded the Lancashire soldiery of the commonwealth, on the marshalling of the parliamentary forces to oppose the Duke of Hamilton. In the same year, he took Appleby from the royalists. His eldest son, Richard, who died an infant, March 25th, 1631, was supposed to have been bewitched to death by one Utley, "who, for the crime, was tried at the assizes at Lancaster, and executed there." His son Ralph espoused the cause of Charles the Second, and was created a baronet in 1663.

As we glide out of sight of Middleton, a prominent feature of the landscape, on the opposite side of the railway, is the wood-crowned summit of "Tandle Hills." These hills overlook the sequestered dairy farms, and shady dingles of an extensive district called "Thornham;" which, though surrounded at short distances by busy manufacturing villages and towns, is a tract full of quaint farm-folds, grassy uplands and dells, interlaced with green old English lanes and hedge-rows. Before the train reaches "Blue Pits," it passes through the estates of the Hopwoods, of Hopwood; and, at some points, the chimneys and gables of Hopwood Hall peep through surrounding woods, in a retired valley, north of the line. As the train begins to slacken on its approach to the station, the old road-side village of Trub Smithy, the scene of many a humorous story, lies nestling beyond

two or three fields to the south, at the foot of a slope, on the high road from Manchester to Rochdale. At "Blue Pits" station, we obeyed the noisy summons to "Change for Heywood," and were put upon the branch line which leads thitherward. The railway hence to Heywood winds through green fields all the way, and is divided from the woods of Hopwood by a long stripe of canal. As we rolled on, the moorland heights of Ashworth, Knowl, Rooley, and Lobden, rose in the back ground before us, seemingly at a short distance, and before any glimpse was seen of the town of Heywood, lying low between us and the hills. But, as we drew near, a canopy of smoky cloud hung over the valley in front; and "we knew by the smoke"—as the song says—that Heywood was near; even if we had never known it before. Heywood is one of the last places in the world where a man who judges of the surrounding country by the town itself, would think of going to ruralize. But, even in this smoky manufacturing town, which is so meagre in historic interest, there are some peculiarities connected with its rise and progress, and the aspects of its present life; and some interesting traits in the characteristics of its inhabitants. And, in its surrounding landscape, there are many picturesque scenes; especially towards the hills, where the rising grounds are cleft, here and there, by romantic glens, long, lonesome, and woody, and wandering far up into the moors, like "Simpson Clough;" and sometimes vales, green and pleasant, by the quiet water-side, like "Tyrone's Bed," and "Hooley Clough."

As the train drew up to that little station, which always looks busy when there are a dozen people in the office, the straggling ends of Heywood streets began to dawn upon us, with the peeping chimney tops of the cotton mills, which lay yet too low down to be wholly seen. Some costly mansions were visible also, belonging to wealthy men of the neighbourhood—mostly rich cotton-spinners—perched on "coignes of vantage," about the green uplands and hollows in the valley, and generally at a respectful distance from the town. Many of the cotton mills began to show themselves entirely—here and there in clusters—the older ones looking dreary, and uninviting to the eye; the new ones as smart as new bricks and long lines of glittering windows could make their dull, square forms appear. A number of brick-built cottages bristled about the summit of a slope which rose in front of us from the station, and closed from view the bulk of

the town, in the valley beyond. We went up the slope, and took a quiet bye-path which leads through the fields, along the southern edge of Heywood, entering the town near the market-place. And now, let us take a glance at the history, and some of the present features of this place.

So far as the history of Heywood is known, it has not been the arena of any of those great historical transactions of England's past, which have so shaken and changed the less remote parts of the country. The present appearance of Heywood would not, perhaps, be any way delightful to the eye of anybody who had no local interest in it. Yet, a brief review of the history, and the quick growth of the place, may not be uninteresting. Heywood is the capital of the township of Heap, and stands principally upon a gentle elevation, in a wide valley, about three miles from each of the towns of Rochdale, Bury, and Middleton. The township of Heap is in the parish and manor of Bury, of which manor the Earl of Derby is lord. This manor has been the property of the Derby family ever since the accession of Henry VII., after the battle of Bosworth Field, when it was granted by the king to his father-in-law, Thomas Stanley, first Earl of Derby, who figures in Shakspere's tragedy of "Richard the Third." The previous possessors were the Pilkingtons, of Pilkington. Sir Thomas Pilkington was an active adherent of the York faction, in the wars of the Roses; and, in a manuscript of Stowe's, his name appears, with a large number of other friends of Richard, who "sware Kynge Richard shuld were ye crowne." There is a secluded hamlet of old-fashioned houses in this township, called "Heap Fold," situated on a hill about half a mile west of Heywood. This hamlet is generally admitted to be the oldest, and, probably, the only settlement in the township of Heap in the time of the Saxons, who first cleared and cultivated the land of the district. Previous to that time, it may be naturally supposed that, like many other parts of South Lancashire, this district was overrun with woods, and swamps, and thickets. Edwin Butterworth published a little pamphlet history of Heywood, from which I quote the following notes:—"The origin of the designation Heap is not at all obvious; in the earliest known mention of the place, it is termed *Hep*, which may imply a tract overgrown with hawthorn berries. The name might arise from the unevenness of the surface—*beep* (Saxon), indicating a mass of irregularities. The denomination 'Heywood' manifestly denotes the site of a

wood in a field, or a wood surrounded by fields." Farther on, in the same pamphlet, he says:—"The local family of Hep, or Heap, has been extinct a considerable time. The deed of the gift of the whole forest of Holecombe, to the monks of St. Mary Magdalen, of Bretton, in Yorkshire, by Roger de Montbegon, is witnessed, amongst others, by Robert de Hep; but without date, being of an age prior to the use of dates. Roger de Montbegon, however, died 10th Henry III., so that this transaction occurred before 1226." It may be true that what is here alluded to as the local family of Hep, or Heap, is extinct; but the name of Heap is now more prevalent among the inhabitants of Heywood and the immediately surrounding towns than anywhere else in England. With respect to the two suppositions as to the origin of the name; almost every Lancashire lad will remember that he has, at one time or another, pricked his fingers with getting "heps," the common bright red berry, which, in other parts, goes by the name of the "hip." And then there is some show of likelihood in the supposition that the name has come from the Saxon word "heep," meaning "a mass of irregularities," as Butterworth says; for the whole district is a succession of hills, and holes, and undulations, of ever-varying size and shape. Again, he says, "Heap was doubtless inhabited by at least one Saxon family, whose descendants, it is probable, quietly conformed to Norman rule. In that era, or perhaps earlier, the place was annexed to the lordship and church of Bury, of which Adam de Bury, and Edward de Buri, were possessors shortly after the conquest.* A family of the name of Hep, or Heap, held the hamlet from the paramount lords. In 1311, third of Edward II., Henery de Bury held one half of the manor of Bury."† Previous to the fifteenth century, this township must have been part of a very wild and untempting region, having, for the most part, little or no settled population, or communion with the living world beyond; and the progress of population, and cultivation of the land, up to that time, appear to have been very slow, and only in a few isolated spots; since, although there were several heys of land at that time, near to a wood, thence called "Heywood," upon the spot now occupied by a busy community of people, numbering twenty thousand at least, yet, there is no record of any dwelling upon that spot until shortly after the fifteenth century, when a

* Testa de Neville. † Harl. MSS. Codex 2,085. fo. 443.

few rural habitations were erected thereon. From this comparatively recent period may be reckoned the dawn of the rural village which has since expanded into the present manufacturing town of Heywood, now thriving at a greater rate than ever, under the impulse of modern industrialism. About this time, too, began the residence there of a family bearing the local name. "In 1492 occurs Robert de Heywood. In the brilliant reign of Elizabeth, Edmund Heywood, Esq., was required, by an order dated 1574, to furnish a coat of plate, a long bowe, shéffe of arrows, steel cap, and bill, for the military musters." * James Heywood, gentleman, was living before 1604. Peter Heywood, Esq., a zealous magistrate, the representative of this family in the reigns of James the I. and Charles the I., was a native and resident of the present Heywood Hall, which was erected during the sixteenth century. It is said that he apprehended Guido Faux, coming forth from the vault of the house of parliament, on the eve of the gunpowder treason, November 5th, 1605; he probably accompanied Sir Thomas Knevett, in his search of the cellars under the parliament house. The principal interest connected with the earliest history of the town of Heywood seems to be bound up in the history of Heywood Hall and its inhabitants, which will be noticed farther on.

The old episcopal chapel, near the market-place, dedicated to St. Luke, is a plain little building, with nothing remarkable in its appearance or its situation. It seems to have been founded at the beginning of the seventeenth century. It contains inscriptions commemorative of the Holts, of Grizlehurst, and the Starkies, of Heywood Hall. A dial-plate on the eastern exterior bears the date of 1686, with the initials of Robert Heywood, Esq., of Heywood Hall, who was governor of the Isle of Man in 1678. Besides the Heywoods, of Heywood Hall, there were several powerful local families in the olden time seated at short distances round the spot where Heywood now stands: the Heaps, of Heap; the Bamfords, of Bamford; the Marlands, of Marland; the Holts, of Grizlehurst; and the Hopwoods, of Hopwood—which last still reside upon their ancient estate.

Heywood, or "Monkey Town," as sarcastic people in other parts of Lancashire sometimes call it, is now a manufacturing place of at least twenty thousand inhabitants. It owes its rise

* Hard. MSS., 1236. There is a pedigree of this family in Dodsworth's MSS. Bodleian Lib. vol. lxxix.

almost entirely to the cotton manufacture; and the history of the latter incorporates the history of the former in a much greater degree than that of any other considerable town in the district. This gives it a kind of interest which certainly does not belong to any beauty the appearance of the town at present possesses. A few years before those mechanical inventions became known which ultimately made Lancashire what it is now, Heywood was a little peaceful country fold; but a few years after these inventions came into action, it began to grow into what the people of those days thought "something rich and strange," with a celerity akin to the growth of great towns in the United States of America. About two hundred years ago, a few rural cottages first arose upon this almost unpeopled spot; and at the time when the manufacture of cotton began in South Lancashire, it was still a small agricultural village, prettily situated in a picturesque scene, about the centre of the ridge of land which is now nearly covered by the present smoky town. This little nucleus clustered near the old chapel which stands in the market-place. Previous to the invention of the fly shuttle, by Kay, in the neighbouring town of Bury; and the ingenious combinations of the inventions of his contemporaries by Arkwright, the Preston barber, almost every farm-house and cottage in this part had the old-fashioned spinning-wheel and the hand-loom in them, wherewith to employ any time the inhabitants could spare from their rural occupations. At the time of Arkwright's first patent, the people of these parts little knew what a change the time's inventions were bringing upon their quiet haunts—still less of the vast influences which were to arise therefrom, combining to the accomplishment of incalculable ends; and they were, at first, slow to wean from their old, independent way of living, partly by farming and partly by manufacturing labour, which they could do in their own houses, and at their own leisure. "Manchester manufacturers are glad," says Arthur Young, in 1770 (the year of Arkwright's first patent), "when bread is dear, for then the people are forced to work." But though the supply of yarn in those days was less than the demand, and the people were not yet draughted away from their old manner of life, they were caught in the web of that inevitable destiny which will have its way, in spite of the will of man. The world's Master had new commissioners abroad for the achievement of new

purposes. These wonder-working seeds of providence, patiently developing themselves in secret, were soon to burst forth in a wide harvest of change upon the field of human life. Certain men of mechanical genius arose, and their creative dreams wrought together in a mysterious way to the production of extraordinary results. John Kay, of Bury, invented the "picking-peg," or "fly-shuttle," in 1738; and his son, Robert Kay, invented the "drop-box," used in the manufacture of fabrics of various colours; and that wonderful cotton and woollen carding machine, which stretches the wire out of the ring, cuts it into lengths, staples and crooks it into teeth, pricks holes in the leather, and puts in the teeth, row after row, with extraordinary speed and precision, till the cards are finished. Thomas Highs, the humble and ingenious reed-maker, at Leigh, in 1763, originated that first remarkable improvement in spinning machinery which he called after his favourite daughter, "Jenny;" and he also introduced the "throstle," or water-frame, in 1767. This man lingered out his old age in affliction and dependence. James Hargreaves, the carpenter, of Blackburn, improved upon the original idea of the spinning jenny, and invented the crank and comb, "an engine of singular merit for facilitating the progress of carding cotton." The ignorant jealousy of the Lancashire operatives in those days drove this ingenious man to seek shelter in Nottinghamshire, where he was but ill-received, and where he ended his days in poverty. He died in a workhouse. Arkwright, the Preston barber, was more endowed by nature with the qualities requisite for worldly success than these ingenious, abstracted, and simple-minded mechanical dreamers. He was a man of great perseverance and worldly sagacity. With characteristic cunning, he appears to have wormed their secrets out of some of these humble inventors; and then, with no less industry and enterprise than ingenuity, he combined these with other kindred inventions, and wrought them into a practical operation, which, by its results, quickly awakened the world to a knowledge of their power. He became a rich man, and "Sir Richard." In 1780, the "spinning mule" was first introduced by its inventor, Samuel Crompton, a dreamy weaver, then dwelling in a dilapidated corner of an old Lancashire hall, called "Th' Hall i'th Wood," in Turton, near Bolton. This machine united the powers of the spinning jenny and the water frame. The spinning mule is now in general use in the cotton manufacture. This poor weaver gave his valuable invention to the public,

without securing a patent. His remuneration, in the shape of money, was therefore left to the cold chances of charity. He was, however, at first, rewarded by a subscription of one hundred guineas; and, *twenty years afterwards*, by an additional subscription of four hundred guineas; and in 1812, parliament awarded the sum of five thousand pounds to the dreamy old weaver, in his latter days. In 1785, the first patent for the power-loom was obtained by the Rev. Edmund Cartwright, of Kent, who invented it; and, after considerable improvements, it has at last contributed another great impulse to the manufacturing power of these districts. Whilst these mechanical agencies were developing themselves, James Watt was busy with his steam power; and Brindley, in conjunction with the Duke of Bridgewater, was constructing his water-ways. They were all necessary parts of one great scheme of social alteration, the end of which is not yet. These men were the immediate sources of the manufacturing power and wealth of Lancashire. Up rose Arkwright's model mill at Cromford; and the people of South Lancashire, who were spinning and weaving in the old way, in their scattered cottages and folds, began to find themselves drawn by irresistible spells into new combinations, and new modes of living and working. Their remote haunts began to resound with the tones of clustering labour; their quiet rivers, late murmuring clear through silent vales and cloughs, began to be dotted with mills; and their little villages shot up into large manufacturing towns. From 1770 to 1788, the use of wool and linen in the spinning of yarns had almost disappeared, and cotton had become the almost universal material for employment. Hand wheels were superseded by common jennies, hand carding by carding engines, and hand picking* by the fly shuttle. From 1778 to 1803 was the golden age of this great trade; the introduction of mule yarns, assimilated with other yarns producing every description of goods, gave a preponderating wealth through the loom. The mule twist being rapidly produced, and the demand for goods very large, put all hands in request; and weaver's shops became yearly more numerous. The remuneration for labour was high, and the population was in a comfortable condition. The dissolution of

* The "picking rod" is a straight wooden handle, by which the hand-loom weaver used to impel his shuttle. "As straight as a pickin' rod," is a common phrase among country people in South Lancashire.

Arkwright's patent in 1785, and the general adoption of mule spinning in 1790, concurred to give the most extraordinary impetus to the cotton manufacture. Numerous mills were erected, and filled with water frames; and jennies and mules were made and set to work with incredible rapidity.* Heywood had already risen up, by the previous methods of manufacture, to a place of about two thousand inhabitants, in the year 1780—that changeful crisis of its history when the manufacture of cotton by steam power first began in the township of Heap, with the erection of Makin Mill, hard by the north side of Heywood. This mill was built by the firm of Peel, Yates, and Co., of Bury—the principal of which firm was Robert Peel, Esq. (afterwards Sir Robert), and father of the memorable Sir Robert Peel, late prime minister of England, whose name is honourably connected with the abolition of the Corn Laws; a man who won the gratitude of a nation by daring to turn "traitor" to a great wrong, that he might help a great right. This mill is now the property of Edmund Peel, Esq., brother of the late Sir Robert. It stands about half a mile from Heywood, in a shady clough, and upon the banks of the river Roch, which rises in the hills on the north-east extremity of the county, and flows down through the town of Rochdale, passing through the glen called "Tyrone's Bed;" and through "Hooley Clough." The river then winds on westward, by the town of Bury, three miles off. The course of this water is now well lined with manufacturing power, nearly from its rise to its embouchure. A stranger may always find the mills of Lancashire by following the courses of its waters.

Before the factory system arose, when the people of this quarter did their manufacturing work at their homes—when they were not yet brought completely to depend upon manufacture for livelihood, and when their manner of life was, at least, more natural and hardy than it became afterwards—their condition was, morally and physically, very good, compared with the condition which the unrestricted factory system led to, in the first rush after wealth which it awoke; especially in the employment of young children in mills. The amount of demoralisation and physical deterioration then entailed upon the population, particularly in isolated nooks of the country, where public opinion had little controlling influence upon such mill-owners as happened to possess

* "Radcliffe's Origin of Power-loom Weaving," pp. 59—66.

more avarice than humane care for their operative dependents, must have been great. It was a wild steeple-chase for wealthy stakes, in which whip and spur were used with little mercy, and few were willing to peril their chances of the plate by any considerations for the sufferings of the animal that carried them. But the condition of the factory operatives, since the introduction of the Ten Hours' Bill—and, perhaps, partly through the earnest public discussions which led to that enactment—has visibly begun to improve. Benevolent and just men, who own mills, have, of their own accord, in many honourable instances, paid a more liberal attention to the welfare of their workpeople even than the provisions of the law demanded: and those mill-owners whose only care for their operatives was bounded by a desire to wring as much work as possible out of them for as little pay as possible, were compelled to fulfil certain humane regulations, which their own sympathies would have been slow to concede. The hours of factory labour are now sytematically shortened; and the operatives are not even so drunken, riotous, and ignorant, as when they were wrought from bed-time to bed-time. Books and schools, and salutary recreation, and social comfort, are more fashionable among them than they used to be—partly because they are more practicable things to them than before. The mills themselves are now healthier than formerly; factory labour is restricted to children of a reasonable age; and elementary education is now, by a wisdom worthy of extension, administered through the impulse of the law, to all children of a certain age in factories.

Heywood is altogether of too modern an origin to contain any buildings interesting to the admirer of ancient architecture. The only places in Heywood around which an antiquarian would be likely to linger, with anything like satisfaction, would be the little episcopal chapel in the market-place, founded in the seventeenth century; and Heywood Hall, which stands about half a mile from the town, and of which more anon. With these exceptions, there is probably not one building in the place two hundred years old.

The appearance of Heywood, whether seen in detail or as a whole, presents as complete, unrelieved, and condensed an epitome of the still-absorbing spirit of manufacture in the region where it originated, as can be found anywhere in Lancashire. And, in all its irregular main street consisting of more than a

mile of brick-built shops and cottages—together with the little streets and alleys diverging therefrom—there does not appear even one modern building remarkable for taste, or for any other distinguishing excellence, sufficient to induce an ordinary man to halt and admire it for a minute. There is not even an edifice characterised by any singularity whatever, calculated to awaken wonder or curiosity in an ordinary beholder, except its great square, brick cotton mills, machine shops, and the like; and when the outside of one of these has been seen, the outside of the remainder is no novelty. The heights and depths principally cultivated in Heywood appear to be those of factory chimneys and coal-pits. Of course, the interiors of the mills teem with mechanical wonders and ingenuities; and the social life and characteristics of the population are full of indigenous interest. But the general exterior of the town exhibits a dull and dusky succession of manufacturing sameness. Its inns, with one or two exceptions, look like jerry-shops; and its places of worship like warehouses. A living writer has said of the place, that it looks like a great funeral on its way from Bury to Rochdale—between which towns it is situated midway. When seen from any neighbouring elevation, on a dull day, this strong figure hardly exaggerates the truth. The whole life of Heywood seems to be governed by the ring of factory bells—at least, much more than by any other bells. The very dwelling-houses look as if they, too, worked in the factories. To persons accustomed to the quaint prettiness of well-regulated English rural villages, and the more natural hue and general appearance of the people in such places, the inhabitants of Heywood would, at first sight, have somewhat of a sallow appearance, and their houses would appear to be slightly smeared with a mixture of soot, sperm oil, and cotton fluz. And, if such observers knew nothing of the real character and habits of the population, they would be slow to believe them a people remarkably fond of cleanliness and of homely comfort, as far as compatible with the nature of their employment. A close examination of these Heywood cottages would show, however, that their insides are more clean and comfortable than the first glance at their outsides might suggest; and would also reveal many other things not discreditable to the native disposition of the people who dwell in them. But the architecture and general characteristics of Heywood, as a town, evince no taste, no refinement, nor even public spirit of liberality, commensurate with its

wealth and energy. The whole population seems yet too wrapt in its manufacturing dream, to care much about the general adornment of the place, or even about any very effective diffusion of those influences which tend to the improvement of the health and the culture of the nobler faculties of the people. But Heywood may yet emerge from its apprenticeship to blind toil; and, wiping the dust from its eyes, look forth towards things quite as essential as this unremitting fight for bread for the day. At present, wherever one wanders among the streets on week-days, the same manufacturing indications present themselves. It is plain that its people are nearly all employed in one way, directly or indirectly. This is suggested, not only by the number and magnitude of the mills, and the habitations of the people, but by every movement on the streets. Every vehicle that passes; every woman and child about the cottages; every lounger in the market-place tells the same story. One striking feature of week-day life in Heywood, more completely even than in many other kindred towns, is the clock-work punctuality with which the operative crowds rush from the mills, and hurry along the streets, at noon, to their dinners; sauntering back again in twos and threes, or speeding along in solitary haste, to get within the mill-doors in time for that re-awakening boom of the machinery which is seldom on the laggard side of its appointment. And it is not only in the dress and manners of this body of factory operatives—in their language and deportment, and the prevailing hue of their countenances—that the character and influence of their employment is indicated; but also in a modified variety of the same features in the remainder of the population, who are either immediately connected with these operatives, or indirectly affected by the same manufacturing influences. I have noticed, however, that factory operatives in country manufacturing towns like Heywood have a more wholesome appearance, both in dress and person, than the same class in Manchester. Whether this arises from any difference in the atmosphere, or from more healthy habits of factory operatives in the country than those induced among the same class by the temptations of a town like Manchester, I cannot say.

In the course of the year, there are two very ancient festivals kept up, each with its own quaint peculiarities, by the Heywood people; and commemorated by them with general rejoicing and cessation from labour. One of these is the "Rush-bearing," held

in the month of August—an old feast which seems to have died out almost everywhere else in England, except in Lancashire. Here, in Heywood, however, as in many other towns of the county, this ancient festival is still observed, with two or three days' holiday and hilarity. The original signification of this annual "Rush-bearing," and some of the old features connected with the ceremony, such as the bearing of the rushes, with great rejoicing, to the church, and the strewing of them upon the earthen floor of the sacred fane, have long since died out. The following passage is taken from a poem called "The Village Festival," written by Elijah Ridings, a living author, of local celebrity, and is descriptive of the present characteristics of a Lancashire "Rush-bearing," as he had seen it celebrated in his native village of Newton, between Manchester and Oldham:—

When wood and barn-owls loudly shout,
As if were near some rabble rout;
When beech-trees drop the yellow leaf,
A type of human hope and grief;
When little wild flowers leave the sun,
Their pretty love-tasks being done;
And nature, with exhaustless charms,
Lets summer die in autumn's arms:
There is a merry, happy time,
With which I'll grace my simple rhyme:—
The wakes—the wakes—the jocund wakes!
My wand'ring memory forsakes
The present busy scene of things,
And soars away on fancy's wings,
For olden times, with garlands crown'd,
And rush-carts green on many a mound,
In hamlet bearing a great name,*
The first in astronomic fame;
With buoyant youth and modest maid,
Skipping along the green-sward glade,
With laughing eyes and ravished sight,
To share once more the old delight!
Oh! now there comes—and let's partake—
Brown nuts, spice bread, and Eccles cake;†
There's flying-boxes, whirligigs,
And sundry rustic pranks and rigs;
With old "Chum"‡ cracking nuts and jokes,
To entertain the country folks;
But more, to earn a honest penny,
And get a decent living, any—
Aye, any an humble, striving way,
Than do what shuns the light of day.
Behold the rush-cart, and the throng
Of lads and lasses pass along!
Now watch the nimble morris-dancers,
Those blithe, fantastic antic-prancers,
Bedeck'd with gaudiest profusion

* The village of *Newton*, on Newton Heath, near Manchester.

† A kind of spiced cake, for which the village of Eccles, near Manchester, is famous.

‡ A quaint old vendor of nuts and Eccles cakes, who used to be well known at Lancashire wakes and fairs.

Of ribbons, in a gay confusion
Of brilliant colours, richest dyes,
Like wings of moths and butterflies;
Waving white kerchiefs here and there,
And up and down, and everywhere:
Springing, bounding, gaily skipping,
Deftly, briskly, no one tripping;
All young fellows, blithe and hearty,
Thirty couples in the party;
And on the footpaths may be seen
Their sweethearts from each lane, and green
And cottage home; all fain to see
This festival of rural glee;
The love-betrothed, the fond heart-plighted,
And with the witching scene delighted
In modest guise, and simple graces,
With roses blushing on their faces;
Ah! what denotes, or what bespeaks
Love more than such sweet apple-cheeks?
Behold the strong-limbed horses stand,
The pride and boast of English land,
Fitted to move in shafts or chains,
With plaited, glossy tails and manes:
Their proud heads each a garland wears
Of quaint devices—suns and stars;
And roses, ribbon-wrought, abound;
The silver plate,* one hundred pound,
With green oak boughs the cart is crowned,
The strong, gaunt horses shake the ground.
Now, see, the welcome host appears,
And thirsty mouths the ale-draught cheers·
Draught after draught is quickly gone—
"Come; here's a health to everyone!"
Away with care and doleful thinking,
The cup goes round; what hearty drinking!
While many a youth the lips is smacking,
And the two drivers' whips are cracking;
Now, strike up music, the old tune;
And louder, quicker, old bassoon;
Come, bustle, lads, for one dance more,
And then *cross-morris* three times o'er.
Another jug—see how it foams—
And next the brown October comes:
Full five years old, the host declares,
And if you doubt it, loudly swears
That it's the best in any town—
Tenpenny ale, the real nut-brown.
And who was he, that jovial fellow,
With his strong ale so old and mellow?
A huge, unwieldy man was he,
Like Falstaff, fat and full of glee;
With belly like a thirty-six†
(Now, reader, your attention fix),
In loose habiliments he stands,
Broad-shouldered, and with brawny hands;
Good humour beaming in his eye.
And the old, rude simplicity;
Ever alive for rough or smooth,
That rare old fellow, Bill o' Booth!‡

* Much valuable silver plate is sometimes lent by the inhabitants of Lancashire villages, to adorn the front of their native rush-cart during its annual peregrinations.

† A thirty-six gallon barrel.

‡ He was the landlord of an old road-side inn, on Newton Heath, with a pleasant bowling-green behind it. The house is still known as "Bill o' Booth's."

The other is a famous old festival here, as well as in the neighbouring town of Bury. It is a peculiarly local one, also; for, I believe, it is not celebrated anywhere else in England except in these two towns. It begins on Mid-Lent Sunday, or "Simblin-Sunday," as the people of the district call it, from the name of a spiced cake which is prepared for this feast in great profusion, and in the making of which there is considerable expense and rivalry shown. On "Simblin-Sunday," the two towns of Bury and Heywood swarm with visitors from the surrounding country, and "simblins" of extraordinary size and value are exhibited in the shop windows. The festival is kept up during two or three days of the ensuing week. In the Rev. W. Gaskell's interesting lectures on the "Lancashire Dialect," the following passage occurs relative to this "Simblin-Cake:"—"As you are aware there is a kind of cake for which the town of Bury is famous, and which gives its name in these parts to Mid-Lent Sunday—I mean 'symnel.' Many curious and fanciful derivations have been found for this; but I feel no doubt that we must look for its true origin to the Anglo-Saxon 'simble' or 'simle,' which means a feast, or 'symblian,' to banquet. 'Simnel' was evidently some kind of the finest bread. From the chronicle of Battle Abbey, we learn that, in proof of his regard for the monks, the Conqueror granted for their daily uses thirty-six ounces of 'bread fit for the table of a king,' which is called *simenel;* and Roger de Hoveden mentions, among the provisions allowed to the Scotch King, at the Court of England, 'twelve *simenels.*' 'Banquet bread,' therefore, would seem to come very near the meaning of this word. I may just observe in passing, that the baker's boy who, in the reign of Henry VII., personated the Earl of Warwick was most likely called 'Lambert Simnel,' as a sort of nickname derived from his trade."*

The amusements, or what may be called the leisure-habits, of the factory population in Lancashire manufacturing towns are much alike. Some are sufficiently jaded when their day's work is done, or are too apathetic by nature to engage heartily in

* The following note is attached to this passage, in Mr. Gaskell's lectures:—"That noble master of language, Walter Savage Landor, who has done me the honour to refer to my lecture in the *Examiner*, says of this word 'symble,' a feast, it is very likely 'symbslum,' which means the same, in form of pic-nic; and adds, 'In Tuscany a fine cake is called *semolino*. When I was a boy at Rugby, I remember a man from Banbury who sold *simnels*, very eatable. The interior was not unlike *mince-pie* without fat, but flavoured with saffron; the exterior was hard, smooth, and yellow.'"

anything requiring further exertion of body or mind. There are many, however, who, when they leave the factory in the evening, go with a kind of renovating glee to the reading of such books as opportunity brings within their reach, or to the systematic prosecution of some chosen study, such as music, botany, mechanics, or mathematics, which are favourite sciences among the working people of Lancashire. And even among the humblest there are often shrewd and well-read, if not extensively-read, politicians, chiefly of the Cobbett school. But the greatest number occupy their leisure with rude physical sports, or those coarser indulgences which, in a place like Heywood, are more easily got at than books and schools, especially by that part of the people who have been brought up in toilful ignorance of these elements. The tap-room is the most convenient school and meeting-place for these; and the tap-rooms are numerous, and well attended. There, factory lads congregate nightly, clubbing their pence for cheap ale, and whiling the night hours away in coarse ribaldry and dominoes, or in vigorous contention in the art of single step-dancing, upon the ale-house hearth-stone. This single step-dancing is a favourite exercise with them; and their wooden clogs are often very neatly made for the purpose, lacing closely up to above the ancle, and ornamented with a multitude of bright brass lace holes. The quick, well-timed clatter upon the tap-room flags generally tells the whereabouts of such dancing haunts to a stranger as he goes along the streets; and, if he peeps into one of them, he may sometimes see a knot of factory lads clustered about the tap-room door inside, encouraging some favourite caperer with such exclamations as, "Deawn wi' thi fuut, Robin! Crack thi rags, owd dog!" The chief out-door sports of the working class are foot-racing, and jumping matches; and sometimes foot-ball and cricket. Wrestling, dog-fighting, and cock-fighting are not uncommon; but they are more peculiar to the hardier population outside the towns. Now and then, a rough "up-and-down" fight takes place, at an ale-house door, or brought off, more systematically, in a nook of the fields. This rude and ancient manner of personal combat is graphically described by Samuel Bamford, in his well-known "Passages in the Life of a Radical." The moors north of Heywood afford great sport in the grouse season. Some of the local gentry keep harriers; and now and then, a "foomart-hunt" takes place, with the long-eared dogs, whose mingled music. when

heard from the hill-sides, sounds like a chime of bells in the distant valley. The entire population, though engaged in manufacture, evinces a hearty love of the fields and field sports, and a strong tincture of the rough simplicity, and idiomatic quaintness of their forefathers, or "fore-elders," as they often call them. In an old fold near Heywood, there lived a man a few years since, who was well known thereabouts as a fighter. The lads of the hamlet were proud of him as a local champion. Sometimes he used to call at a neighbouring ale-house, to get a gill, and have a "bout" with anybody worth the trouble, for our hero had a sort of chivalric dislike to spending his time on "wastrils" unworthy of his prowess. When he chanced to be seen advancing from the distance, the folk in the house used to say, "Hellho! so-and-so's coming; teen th' dur!" whereupon the landlord would reply, "Nawe, nawe! lev it oppen, or else he'll punce it in! But yo'n no casion to be fleyed, for he's as harmless as a chylt to aught at's wayker nor his-sel!" He is said to have been a man of few words, except when roused to anger; when he uttered terrible oaths, with great vehemence. The people of his neighbourhood say that he once swore so heavily when in a passion, that a plane-tree, growing at the front of his cottage, withered away from that hour. Most Lancashire villages contain men of this stamp—men of rude, strong frame and temper, whose habits, manners, and even language, smack a little of the days of Robin Hood. Yet, it is not uncommon to find them students of botany and music, and fond of little children. Jane Clough, a curious local character, died at a great age, near Heywood, about a year and a half ago. Jane was a notable country botanist, and she had many other characteristics which made her remarkable. She was born upon Bagslate Heath, a moorland tract, up in the hills, to the north-east of Heywood. I well remember that primitive country amazon, who, when I was a lad, was such an old-world figure upon the streets of Rochdale and Heywood. Everybody knew Jane Clough. She was very tall, and of most masculine face and build of body; with a clear, healthy complexion. She was generally drest in a strong, old-fashioned blue woollen bedgown, and thick petticoats of the same stuff. She wore a plain but very clean linen cap upon her head, loosely covered with a silk kerchief; and her foot-gear was heavy clouted shoon, or wooden clogs, suitable to her rough country walks, her great strength, and masculine habits.

Botany was always a ruling passion with old moorland Jane. She was the queen of all flower-growers in humble life upon her native ground; especially in the cultivation of the polyanthus, auricula, tulip, and "ley," or carnation. Jane was well known at all the flower shows of the neighbourhood, where she was often a successful exhibitor; and though she was known as a woman of somewhat scrupulous moral character—and there are many anecdotes illustrative of this—yet she was almost equally well known at foot-races and dog-battles, or any other kind of battles; for which she not unfrequently held the stakes.

There used to be many a "hush-shop," or house for the sale of unlicensed drink, about Heywood; and if the district was thrown into a riddle, they would turn up, now and then, yet; especially in the outskirts of the town, and up towards the hills. These are generally sly spots, where fuddlers, who like ale for its own sake, can steal in when things are quiet, and get their fill at something less than the licensed price; or carry off a bottle-full into the fields, after the gloaming has come on. Of course hush-shop tipplers could not often indulge in that noisy freedom of speech, nor in those wild bursts of bacchanalian activity vulgarly known by the name of "hell's delight," of which licensed ale-houses are sometimes the scenes; and where the dangerous Lancashire ale-house game, called "Th' Bull upo' th' Bauk," has sometimes finished a night of drunken comedy with a touch of real tragedy. The most suitable customers for the "hush-shop" were quiet, steady soakers, who cared for no other company than a full pitcher; and whose psalm of life consisted of scraps of drinking-songs like the following, trolled out in a low chuckling tone:—

O good ale, thou art my darling,
I love thee night, I love thee morning,
I love thee new, I love thee old;
I love thee warm, I love thee cold!
Oh! good ale!

There is an old drinking-song just re-published in "The Songs of the Dramatists," which was printed in 1575, in Bishop Still's comedy of "Gammer Gurton's Needle," though probably known earlier. Fragments of this song are still known and sung in the north of England. The burden runs thus in a Lancashire version:—

Back and side, go bare, go bare,
Fuut and hond, go coud;
But bally, God send thee good ale enough,
Whether it's yung or owd!

Having glanced in this brief way at the progress of Heywood, from the time when it first began to give a human interest to the locality, as a tiny hamlet, about the end of the fifteenth century, up to its present condition, as a cotton-spinning town of twenty thousand inhabitants, surrounded by a district alive with manufacturing activities, I will return to the narrative of my visit to the place, as it fell on one fine afternoon about the end of June.

We had come round from the railway station, along the southern edge of the town, and through the fields, by a footpath which led us into Heywood about one hundred yards from the old chapel in the middle of the place. The mills were stopped. Country people were coming into town to do their errands, and a great part of the working population appeared to be sauntering along the main street, stopping at the shops, to make their markets as they went along; or casting about for their Saturday night's diversion, and gazing from side to side, to see what could be seen. Clusters of factory girls were gathered about the drapers' windows. These girls were generally clean and tidy; and, not unfrequently, there were very intelligent and pretty countenances amongst them. The older part of the factory operatives, both men and women, had often a staid and jaded look. The shops were busy with customers buying clothing, or food, or cheap publications; and the ale-houses were getting lively. A little company of young "factory chaps" were collected about a bookseller's shop, near the old "Queen Anne," looking out for news, or pictures; or reading the periodicals exposed in the windows. Now and then, a select straggler wended his way across the road to change his "library-book" at the Mechanics' Institution. There was considerable stir lower down the street, where a noisy band of music was marching along, followed by an admiring multitude. And, amongst the whole, a number of those active, mischief-loving lads, so well known in every manufacturing town by the name of "doffers," were clattering about, and darting after one another among the crowd, as blithe as if they had never known what work was. We crossed through the middle of the town, and went down the north road into an open tract of meadow land, towards the residence of mine host.

The house was pleasantly situated in a garden, about two stones' throw from the edge of Heywood, in the wide level of grass land called "Yewood Ho' Greyt Meadow." The road

goes close by the end of the garden. We entered this garden by a little side gate, and on we went, under richly-blossomed apple trees, and across the grass-plat, into the house. The old housekeeper began to prepare tea for us; and, in the meantime, we made ourselves at home in the parlour, which looked out upon the garden and meadows at the front. Mine host sat down to the piano, and played some of that fine old psalmody which the country people of Lancashire take such delight in. His family consisted of himself, a staid-looking old housekeeper, and his two motherless children. One of these was a timid, bright-eyed little girl, with long flaxen hair, who, as we came through the garden, was playing with her hoop upon the grass-plat, under the blooming apple trees; but who, on seeing a stranger, immediately sank into a shy stillness. The other was a contemplative lad, about thirteen, with a Melancthon style of countenance. I found him sitting in the parlour, absorbed in "Roderick Random." As soon as tea was over, we went out in the cool of the evening, to see the daylight die upon the meadows around. We could hear the stir of Saturday night life in the town. Through the parlour window we had caught glimpses of the weird flittings of a large bat; and, as we stood bare-headed in the garden, it still darted to and fro about the eaves, in dusky, vivid motions. As the cool night stole on, we went in, and the shutters closed us from the scene. We lingered over supper, talking of what newspaper writers call "the topics of the day," and of books, and local characters and customs; and about half an hour before midnight we crept off to bed.

When I rose from bed, and looked through the window of my chamber, the rich haze of a cloudless midsummer morning suffused the air. The sunshine lay glittering all over the dewy fields; for the fiery steeds of Phœbus had not yet drunk up those springs "on chaliced flowers that lie." The birds had been up many an hour, and were carolling and chirping gleefully about the eaves of the house, and in the gardens. The splendour of the day had touched even the dull town on the opposite ridge with its beautifying magic; and Heywood seemed to rest from its labours, and rejoice in the gladness which clothed the heavens and the earth. The long factory chimneys, which had been bathing their smokeless tops all night in the cool air, now looked up serenely through the sunshine at the

blue sky, as if they, too, were glad to get rid of the week-day fume, and gaze quietly again upon the loveliness of nature; and all the whirling spinning machinery of the town was lying still and silent as the over-arching heavens. Another Sabbath had dawned upon the world; and that day of God, and god of days, was breathing its balm among the sons of toil once more.

> Man has another day to swell the past,
> And lead him near to little, but his last;
> But mighty nature bounds as from her birth:
> The sun is in the heavens, and life on earth;
> Flowers in the valley, splendour in the beam,
> Health on the gale, and freshness in the stream.
> Immortal man! behold her glories shine,
> And cry, exulting inly, "They are mine!"
> Gaze on, while yet thy gladden'd eye may see;
> A morrow comes when they are not for thee.

It was a feast to the senses and to the soul to look round upon such a scene at such a time, with the faculties fresh from repose, and conscious of reprieve from that relentless round of necessities that follow them, hot-foot, through the rest of the week. As I dressed myself, I heard mine host's little daughter begin to play "Rosseau's Dream," in the parlour below, and I went down stairs humming a sort of accompaniment to the tune; for it is a sweet and simple melody, which chimed well with the tone of the hour. The shy musician stayed her fingers, and rose timidly from her seat, as I entered the room; but a little coaxing induced her to return to it, and she played the tune over and over again for us, whilst the morning meal was preparing. Breakfast was soon over, and the youngsters dressed themselves for chapel, and left us to ourselves; for the one small bell of Heywood chapel was going "Toll—toll—toll;" and straggling companies of children were wending up the slope from the fields towards their Sunday schools. Through the parlour window, I watched these little companies of country children—so fresh, so glad, and sweet-looking—and as they went their way, I thought of the time when I, too, used to start from home on a Sunday morning, dressed in my holiday suit, clean as a new pin from top to toe; and followed to the door with a world of gentle admonitions. I thought of some things I learned "while standing at my mother's knee;" of the little prayer and the blessing at bed time; of the old solemn tunes which she used to sing when all the house was still, whilst I sat and listened, drinking in those plaintive strains of devotional melody, never to forget them more.

We were now alone in the silent house, and there was a Sabbatical stillness all around. The sunshine gleamed in at the windows and open doors; and, where we sat, we could smell the odours of the garden, and hear the birds outside. We walked forth into the garden, among beds of flowers, and blooming apple trees. We could hear the chirrup of children's voices, still, going up the road, towards the town. From the woods round Heywood Hall, there came over the meadows a thrilling flood of music from feathered singers, sporting in those leafy shades. All nature was at morning service: and it was good to listen to this general canticle of praise to Him "whose service is perfect freedom." A kind of hushed joy seemed to pervade the landscape, which did not belong to any other day, however fine—as if the hills and vales knew it was Sunday. To the wisest men, the whole universe is one place of worship, and the whole course of human life a divine service. The man who has a susceptible heart, and loves nature, will find renovation in communion with her, no matter what troubles may disturb him in the world of man's life:—

> For she can so inform
> The mind that is within us, so impress
> With quietness and beauty, and so feed
> With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
> Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
> Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
> The dreary intercourse of daily life
> Shall e'er prevail against us or disturb
> Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
> Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
> Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
> And let the misty-mountain winds be free
> To blow against thee.

The back yard of the house, in which we were sauntering, was divided from the woods of Heywood Hall by a wide level of rich meadows; and the thick foliage which lapped the mansion from view, looked an inviting shelter from the heat of a cloudless midsummer forenoon—a place where we could wander about swardy plots and lawns, among embowered nooks and mossy paths—bathing in the coolness of green shades, in which a multitude of birds were waking the echoes with a sweet tumult of blending melodies. Being disposed for a walk, we instinctively took the way thitherward. The high road from the town goes close by the front gates of the hall. This road was formerly lined by a thick grove of trees, called "Th' Lung Nursery," reaching nearly from the edge

of the village to the gates. The grove so shut out the view, and overhung each side of the way, that the walk between looked lonely after dark; and country folk, who had been loitering late over their ale, in Heywood, began to toot from side to side, with timid glances, and stare with fear at every rustle of the trees, when they came to "Th' Lung Nursery." Even if two were in company, they hutched closer together as they approached this spot, and began to be troubled with vivid remembrances of manifold past transgressions, and to make internal resolutions to "Fear God, an' keep th' co'sey," thenceforth, if they could only manage to "hit th' gate" this once, and get safely through the nursery, and by the water-stead in Hooley Clough, where "Yewood Ho' Boggart comes a-suppin' i'th deead time o'th neet." This road was then, also, flanked on each side by a sprawling thorn-edge, overgrown with wild mint, thyme, and nettles; and with thistles, brambles, stunted hazles, and wild rose bushes; with wandering honeysuckles weaving about through the whole. It was full of irregular dinges, and "hare-gates," and holes, from which clods had been riven; and perforated by winding tunnels and runs, where the mole, the weasel, the field-mouse, and the hedgehog wandered at will. Among the thorns at the top, there was many an erratic, scratchy breach, the result of the incursions of country herbalists, hunters, bird-nesters, and other roamers of the woods and fields. It was one of those old-fashioned hedges which country lads delight in; where they could creep to and fro, in a perfect revel of freedom and fun, among brushwood and prickles, with no other impediment than a wholesome scratching; and where they could fight and tumble about gloriously, among nettles, mint, mugwort, docks, thistles, sorrel, "Robin-run-i'th-hedge," and a multitude of other wild herbs and flowers, whose names and virtues it would puzzle even a Culpepper to tell; rough and free as so many snod-backed modiwarps—ripping and tearing, and soiling their "good clooas," as country mothers used to call them, by tumbling among the dry soil of the hedge-side, and then rolling slap into the wet ditch at the bottom, among "cuckoo-spit," and "frog-rud," and all sorts of green pool-slush; to the dismay of sundry limber-tailed "Bull-Jones," and other necromantic fry that inhabit such stagnant moistures. Some looked for nests, and some for nuts, while others went rustling up the trees, trying the strength of many a bough; and all were blithe and free as

the birds among the leaves, until the twilight shades began to fall. Whilst the sun was still in the sky, they thought little about those boggarts, and "fairees," and "feeorin'," which, according to local tradition, roam the woods, and waters, and lonely places; sometimes with the malevolent intent of luring into their toil any careless intruder upon their secluded domain. Some lurking in the streams and pools, like "Green Teeth," and "Jenny Long Arms," waiting, with skinny claws, for an opportunity to clutch the wanderer upon the bank into the water. Others, like "Th' White Lady," "Th' Skrikin' Woman," "Baum Rappit." "Grizlehurst Boggart," and "Clegg Ho' Boggart," haunting lonely nooks of the green country, and old houses, where they have made many a generation of simple folk pay a toll of superstitious fear for some deed of darkness done in the dim past. Others, like "Nut Nan," prowling about shady recesses of the woods, "wi' a poke-full o' red-whot yetters, to brun nut-steylers their e'en eawt." But, when dusky evening began to steal over the fading scene, and the songs of birds, and all the sounds of day began to die upon the ear—when the droning beetle, and the bat began to flit about; and busy midges danced above the road, in mazy eddies, and spiral columns, between the eye and the sky; then the superstitious teachings of their infancy began to play about the mind; and, mustering their traps, the lads turned their feet homeward, tired, hungry, scratched, dirty, and pleased; bearing away with them—in addition to snndry griping feeds of unripe dogberry, which they had eaten from the hedge-sides—great store of hazle-nuts, and earth-nuts; hips and haws; little whistles, made of the bark of the wicken tree; slips of the wild rose, stuck in their caps and button-holes; yellow "skedlocks," and whip-lashes made of plaited rushes; and sometimes, also, stung-up eyes and swollen cheeks, the painful trophies of encounters with the warlike inhabitants of "wasp-nests," unexpectedly dropped on, in the course of their frolic.

> Oh! sweet youth; how soon it fades;
> Sweet joys of youth, how fleeting!

The road home was beguiled with clod-battles, "Frog-leap," and "Bob Stone," finishing with "Trinel," and "High Cockolorum," as they drew near their quarters. The old hedge and the nursery have been cleared away, and now the fertile meadows lie open to the view, upon each side of the way.

On arriving at the entrance which leads to Heywood Hall, we turned in between the grey gate-pillars. They had a lone and disconsolate appearance. The crest of the Starkies is gone from the top; and the dismantled shafts look conscious of their shattered fortunes. The wooden gate—now ricketty and rotten—swung to and fro with a grating sound upon its rusty hinges, as we walked up the avenue of tall trees, towards the hall. The old wood was a glorious sight, with the flood of sunshine stealing through its fretted roof of many-patterned foliage, in freakish threads and bars, which played beautifully among the leaves, weaving a constant interchange of green and gold within that pleasant shade, as the plumage of the wood moved with the wind. The scene reminded me of a passage in Spencer's "Faëry Queene:"—

> And all within were paths and alleies wide,
> With footing worne and leading inward farre:
> Faire harbour that them seems: so in they entred ar.

We went on under the trees, along the carriage road, now tinged with a creeping hue of green; and past the old garden, with its low, bemossed brick wall; and, after sauntering to and fro among a labyrinth of footpaths, which wind about the cloisters of this leafy cathedral, we came to the front of the hall. It stands tenantless and silent in the midst of its ancestral woods, upon the brow of a green eminence, overlooking a little valley, watered by the Roch. The landscape was shut out from us by the surrounding trees; and the place was as still as a lonely hermitage in the heart of an old forest. The tread of our feet upon the flagged terrace in front of the mansion resounded upon the ear. We peeped through the windows, where the rooms were all empty; but the state of the walls and floors, and the remaining mirrors, showed that some care was still bestowed upon this deserted hall. Ivy hung thickly upon some parts of the straggling edifice, which has evidently been built at different periods; though, so far as I could judge, the principal part of it appears to be about two hundred years old. When manufacture began greatly to change the appearance of the neighbouring village and its surrounding scenery, the Starkies left the place; and a wooded mound, in front of the hall, was thrown up and planted, by order of the widow of the last Starkie who resided here, in order to shut from sight the tall chimneys which were rising up in the distance. A large household must have been

kept here in the palmy days of the Starkies. The following passage, relative to the ancient inhabitants of Heywood Hall, is quoted from Edwin Butterworth's "History of the Town of Heywood and its Vicinity:"—

A family bearing this name flourished here for many generations; but they were never of much note in county genealogy, though more than one were active in public affairs. In 1492 occurs Robert de Heywode. In the brilliant reign of Elizabeth, Edmund Heywood, Esq., was required, by an order dated 1574, to furnish "a coate of plate, a long bowe, sheffe of arrows, steel cap, and bill, for the military musters."* James Heywood, gent., was living before 1604. Peter Heywood, Esq., a zealous magistrate, the representative of this family in the reigns of James the First and Charles the First, was a native and resident of Heywood hall, which was erected during the sixteenth century. It is said that he apprehended Guido Faux coming forth from the vault of the house of parliament on the eve of the gunpowder treason, Nov. 5, 1605. He probably accompanied Sir Thomas Kneuett, in his search of the cellars under the parliament house. In 1641, "an order was issued that the justices of the peace of Westminster should carefully examine what strangers were lodged within their jurisdiction; and that they should administer the oaths of allegiance and supremacy to all suspected of recusancy, and proceed according to those statutes. An afternoon being appointed for that service in Westminster hall, and many persons warned to appear there, amongst the rest one —— James, a Papist, appeared, and being pressed by Mr. Hayward (Heywood), a justice of the peace, to take the oaths, suddenly drew out his knife and stabbed him; with some reproachful words, 'for persecuting poor Catholics.' This strange, unheard-of outrage upon the person of a minister of justice, executing his office by an order of parliament, startled all men; the old man sinking with the hurt, though he died not of it. And though, for aught I could ever hear, it proceeded only from the rage of a sullen varlet (formerly suspected to be crazed in his understanding), without the least confederacy or combination with any other, yet it was a great countenance to those who were before thought over apprehensive and inquisitive into dangers; and made many believe it rather a design of all the Papists of England, than a desperate act of one man, who could never have been induced to it, if he had not been promised assistance by the rest."† Such is Lord Clarendon's account of an event that has rendered Peter Heywood a person of historical note; how long he survived the attempt to assassinate him is not stated.

It is highly probable that Mr. Heywood had imbibed an undue portion of that anti-Catholic zeal which characterised the times in which he lived, and that he was the victim of those rancorous animosities which persecution never fails to engender.

Peter Heywood, of Heywood, Esq., was one of the gentlemen of the county who compounded for the recovery of their estates, which had been sequestrated 1643-5, for supporting the royal cause. He seems to have been a son of the Mr. Heywood that was stabbed; he re-obtained his property for the sum of £351.‡

The next of this family on record is Peter *Heiwood*, Esq., who was one of the "counsellors of Jamaica" during the commonwealth. One of his sons, Peter *Heiwood*, Esq., was commemorated by an inscription on a flat stone in the chancel of the church of St. Anne's-in-the-Willows, Aldersgate-ward, London, as follows:—

"Peter Heiwood, that deceased Nov. 2, 1702, younger son of Peter Heiwood, one of the counsellours of Jamaica, by Grace, daughter of Sir John Muddeford, Knight and Baronet, great grandson to Peter Heywood, in the county palatine of Lancaster; who apprehended Guy Faux with his dark lanthorn; and for his zealous prosecution of Papists, as justice of peace, was stabbed in Westminster hall, by John James, Dominican friar, anno. domini. 1640.

"Reader, if not a papist bred,
Upon such asbes gently tread."§

* Harl. MSS. 1,926. There is a pedigree of this family in Dodsworth's MSS. Bodleian Lib. vol. lxxix.

† Clarendon's "History of the Rebellion," edit. 1714, v. 1, p. 196.

‡ Baines's 4to. "Hist. Lancashire," v. 1, p. 586: v. 2, p. 676. 12mo: v. 1, p. 55. Adams's Cat. of Lords, &c., who compounded for their estates, p. 51.

§ Survey of London, by Stowe, Strype's edition, 1720, vol. 1, fol. 102.

Robert Heywood, of Heywood, Esq., married Mary Haslam, of Rochdale, Dec. 20, 1660; and was probably elder brother of Peter *Heiwood*, of London.

In the visitation of 1664, are traced two lines of the Heywoods, those of Heywood and Walton; from the latter was descended Samuel Heywood, Esq., a Welch judge,† uncle of Sir Benjamin Heywood, Baronet, of Claremont, near Manchester. The armorial bearing of the Heywoods, of Heywood, was argent, three torteauxes, between two bendlets gules.

The property of this ancient family, principally consisting of Heywood Hall and adjoining lands, is said to have been purchased by Mr. John Starkey, of the Orchard, in Rochdale, in the latter part of the seventeenth or the beginning of the eighteenth century. Mr. Starkey was living in 1719; his descendant, John Starkey, Esq., married Mary, daughter of Joseph Gregge, Esq., of Chamber Hall, Oldham. John Starkey, Esq., who died March 13, 1780, was father of James Starkey, Esq., of Fell Foot, near Cartmel, Lancashire, the present possessor of Heywood Hall, born September 8, 1762, married, September 2, 1785, Elizabeth, second daughter of Edward Gregg Hopwood, Esq. In 1792, Mr. Starkey served the office of high sheriff of the county. From this family branched the Starkeys of Redivals, near Bury.

Heywood looks anything but picturesque, at present; but, judging from the features of the country about the hall, especially on the north side of it, this house must have been a very pleasant and retired country seat about a century and a half ago.

Descending from the eminence, upon the northern edge of which Heywood Hall is situated,—and which was probably the first inhabited settlement hereabouts, at a time when the ground now covered by the manufacturing town, was a tract of woods and thickets, wild swards, turf moss, and swamps—we walked westward, along the edge of the Roch, towards the manufacturing hamlet of Hooley Bridge. This valley, by the water-side, has a sylvan and cultivated appearance. The quiet river winds round the pastures of the hall, which slope down to the water, from the shady brow upon which it stands. The opposite heights are clad with woods and plantations; and Crimble Hall looks forth from the lawns and gardens upon the summit. About a mile up this valley, towards Rochdale town, in a quiet glen, lies the spot pointed out in Roby's "Tradition" of "Tyrone's Bed," as the place where the famous Irish rebel, Hugh O'Niel, Earl of Tyrone, lived in concealment some time, during the reign of Elizabeth. Even at this day, country folks, who know little or nothing of the tradition, know the place by the name of "Yel's o' Thorone"—an evident corruption of the "Earl of Tyrone." This was the Irish chieftain who burnt the poet Spenser out of his residence, Rathcormac Castle. It was dinner time when we reached

† Corry's Lancashire, v. 2, p. 619. In Dodsworth's MSS. Bodleian Lib. v. cxvii. p. 163, is a record of Robert Heywood, Esq.

the stone bridge at Hooley Clough; so we turned up the road towards home.

The youngsters and the dinner were waiting for us, when we got back to the house. The little girl was rather more communicative than before; and, after the meal was over, we had more music. But, while this was going on, the lad stole away to some nook, with a book in his hand. And, soon after, the master of the house and I found ourselves again alone, smoking and talking together. I had enjoyed this summer day so far, and was inclined to make the most of it; so, when dinner was over, I went out at the back, and down by a thorn-edge, which divides the meadows. I was soon followed by mine host, and we sauntered on together till we came to a shelving hollow, in which a still pool lay gleaming like a sun among the meadows. It looked cool, and brought the skies to our feet. Sitting down upon its bank, we watched the reflection of many a straggling cloud of gauzy white, sailing over its surface, eastward. Little fishes, leaping up now and then, were the only things which stirred the burnished mirror, for a second or two, into tiny tremulations of liquid gold; and water-flies darted to and fro upon the pool, like nimble fancies in a fertile mind. And thus we lazily enjoyed the glory of a summer day in the fields; while

> The lark was singing in the blinding sky,
> And hedges were white with may.

After awhile, we drifted dreamily asunder, and I crept under the shade of a fence hard by, to avoid the heat; and there lay on my back, looking towards the sky, through my fingers, to keep sight of a fluttering spot from which a skylark poured down its rain of melody upon the fields around. My face was half buried in grass and meadow herbs; and I fell asleep with them peeping about my eye-lids. After half an hour's dreamy doze in the sun—during which my mind seemed to have acted over a whole lifetime in masquerade—I woke up, and, shaking the buzz of field-flies out of my ears, we gathered up our books, and went into the house.

When it drew towards evening, we left the house again—for it was so fine outside, that it seemed a pity to remain under cover longer than necessary—and we walked through the village in Hooley Clough, and on, northward, up hill, and down dell, until we came to a wild upland, called

"Birtle," which stretches away along the base of Ashworth Moor. The sun was touching the top of the hills when we reached that elevated tract; and the western heavens were glowing with the grandeur of his decline as we walked across the fields towards an old hamlet called "Grislehurst." Here we stayed a while, conversing with an ancient cottager and his dame, about the history of their native corner, its legendary associations, and other matters interesting to them and to us. We left Grislehurst in the twilight, by a route which led through the deeps of Simpson Clough, and on, homewards, just as the first lamps of evening were lighting up; rejoicing in the approach of a cloudless summer night, as we had rejoiced in the glorious day which had gone down.

The next morning, I returned to Manchester; and, since that time, it has often been a pleasure to me in the crowded city to recollect that summer day, spent in the country north of the town of Heywood. Its images never return to my memory but I wish to hold them there awhile. Emerson says:—"Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of emperors ridiculous. The dawn is my Assyria; the sunset and moonrise my Paphos, and unimaginable realms of faërie; broad noon shall be my England of the senses and the understanding; the night shall be my Germany of mystic philosophy and dreams." If men had their eyes open to the beauties and uses of those elements which are open to all alike, and felt the grandeur of this earth, which is the common home of the living, how much would it reconcile them to their differences of position, and moderate their repinings at the superiority of this man's housing, and that man's dress and diet.

Looking back at the present character and previous history of this town of Heywood, there is some suggestive interest in both the one and the other. The period of its existence—from the time when it first arose, in an almost uncultivated spot, as an habitation of man, till now—is contained in such a brief space, that to any man who cares to consider the nature of its origin, and the character of the influences which have combined to make it such as it now is, the materials for guiding him to a comprehension of these things, lie almost as much within his reach as if the place were a plant which he had put into the soil for himself, and the growth of which he had occasionally watched with interest. In this respect,

although Heywood wears much the same general appearance as other cotton-spinning towns, it has something of a character of its own, different from most of those towns of Lancashire, whose histories go back many centuries, often through eventful changes, till they grow dim among the early records of the kingdom in general. Unlike those, however, Heywood is almost entirely the creation of the cotton trade, which itself arose out of the combination of a few ingenious thoughts put into practice by a people who seem to have been eminently fitted by nature to perceive their value, and to act enterprisingly upon what they perceived. If it had been possible for an intelligent man to have lifted himself into mid air above Heywood, about two hundred years ago, when its first cottages began to cluster into a little village, and to settle himself comfortably upon a cloud, so as to be able to watch the growth of the place below, with all the changing phases of its life from then till now, it might present to him a different aspect, and lead him to different conclusions to those engendered by people living and moving among the swarms of human action. In the mind of such a serene overlooker—distinctly observing the detail and the whole of the manner of life beneath him, and fully comprehending the nature of the rise and progress of this Lancashire town—many thoughts might arise, which would not occur to those who creep about the crowded earth, full of little perturbations. But, to almost any thoughtful man, the history of this manufacturing town would illustrate the power which a little practical knowledge gives to a practical people over the physical elements of creation, as well as over that portion of the people who have little or no education, and are, therefore, drifted hither and thither by every wind of circumstance which wafts across the surface of society. It might suggest, too, how much society is indebted, for whatever force or excellence there is in it, to the scattered seeds of silent thought which have quietly done their work among the noise of action—for ever leading it on to still better action; and it might suggest how much the character of the next generation depends upon the education of the present one. Looking at this question of education merely in that point of view in which it affects production, the following passage, by an eminent advocate of education, shall speak for itself:—"Prior to education, the productive power of the six millions of workers in the United Kingdom

would be the physical force which they were capable of exerting. In the present day, the power really exerted is equal to the force of a hundred millions of men at least. But the power of the uneducated unit is still the physical force of one man, the balance being exerted by men who understand the principles of mechanics and of chemistry, and who superintend the machine power evolved thereby. Thus the power originated by the few, and superintended by a fraction of society, is seventeen times greater than the strength of all our workers, and is hourly increasing." If a man was a pair of steam looms, how carefully would he be oiled, and tended, and mended, and made to do all that a pair of looms could do. What a loom, full of miraculous faculties is he, compared to these—the master-piece of nature for creative power, and for wonderful variety of capabilities! yet, with what a profuse neglect he is cast away, like the cheapest rubbish on earth!

The Grave of Grislehurst Boggart.

Thought-wrapt, he wandered in the breezy woods,
In which the summer, like a hermit, dwelt:
He laid him down by the old haunted springs
Up-bubbling, 'mid a world of greenery,
Shut-eyed, and dreaming of the fairest shapes
That roam the woods.

—Alexander Smith.

Whiles glow'ring round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares.

—Burns.

WHEN one gets a few miles off any of the populous towns in Lancashire, many an old wood, many a lonesome clough, many a quiet stream and ancient building, is the reputed haunt of some local sprite, or "boggart," or is enveloped in an atmosphere of dread by the superstitions of the neighbourhood, as being the resort of fairies, or "feeorin."* This is frequently the case in retired vales and nooks lying between the towns. But it is particularly so in the hilly parts, where the old manners of the people are little changed, and where many homelets of past ages still stand in their old solitudes, and—like their sparse population—retain many of their ancient characteristics. In such places, the legends and superstitions of the forefathers of Lancashire are cherished with a tenacity which would hardly be credible to the inhabitants of great cities in these days. There, still lingers the belief in witchcraft, and in the power of certain persons to do ill, through peculiar connection with the evil one; and the belief, also, that others—known as "witch-doctors"—are able to "rule the spells," or counteract the malign intents of necromancy; and possess secret charms which afford protection against the foul fiend and all his brood of infernal agencies.

* *Feeorin*—fearful things.

A few years ago, I lived at an old farm, called "Peanock," up in the hills, towards Blackstone Edge. At that time, a strong little fellow about twenty-three years of age, called "Robin," was employed as "keaw-lad" at the farm. Robin used to tell me tales of the witches and boggarts of the neighbourhood. The most notable one of them all was "Clegg Ho' Boggart," which is commemorated by the late Mr. John Roby, in his "Traditions of Lancashire." This local sprite is still the theme of many a winter's tale, among the people of the hills about Clegg Hall. The proverb "Aw'm here again—like Clegg Ho' Boggart," is common there, and in the surrounding towns and villages. I remember Robin saying that when he had to go into the "shippon" early on a winter's morning, with a light, he used to advance his lantern and let it shine a minute or two into the "shippon" before he durst enter himself, on account of the "feeorin" which "swarmed up and deawn th' inside i'th neet time." But he said that "things o' that mak couldn't bide leet," for, as soon as his lantern glinted into the place, he could see "witches scuttering through th' slifters o'th wole, by theawsans, like bits o' leet'nin." He used to tell me, too, that a dairy-lass at a neighbouring farm had to let go her "churn-pow," because "a rook o' little green divuls begun a-swarmin up th' hondle, as hoo wur churnin'." And then he would glance, with a kind of unconscious timidity, towards a nook of the yard, where stood three old cottages connected with the farm; and in one of which there dwelt an aged man, of singular habits and appearance, of whose supposed supernatural powers most of the people of that neighbourhood harboured a considerable degree of fear; and, as he glanced towards the corner of the building, he would tell me in an under tone that the Irish cow, "Red Jenny," which used to be "as good a keaw as ever whiskt a tail, had never lookt up sin' owd Bill glented at hur through a hole i'th shippon wole, one mornin, as Betty wur milkin hur." Prejudices of this kind are still common in thinly-peopled nooks of the Lancashire hills. "Boggarts" appear, however, to have been more numerous than they are now, when working people wove what was called "one lamb's wool" in a day; but when it came to pass that they had to weave "three lambs' wools" in a day, and the cotton trade arose, boggarts, and fairies, and "feeorin" of all kinds, began to flee away from the clatter of shuttles, and the tired weaver

was fain to creep from his looms to bed, where he could rest his body, and weave his fearful fancies into the freakish pattern of a dream. And then, railway trains began to rumble hourly through solitudes where "the little folk" of past days had held undisturbed sway; and perhaps these helped to dispel some of those dreams of glamour which had been fostered by the ignorance of the past.

Far on in the afternoon of a summer day, I sat at tea with an acquaintance who dwells in the fields outside the town of Heywood. We had spent the forenoon in visiting Heywood Hall, and rambling among its woods, and through a pleasant clough, which winds along the northern base of the eminence on which that old mansion stands. We lingered over the afternoon meal, talking of the past and present of the district around us. We speculated upon the ancient aspect of the country, and the condition and characteristics of its early inhabitants; we talked of the old local gentry, their influence, their residences, and their fortunes; of remarkable local scenes, and men; and of the present features of life in these districts. Part of our conversation related to the scenery of that tract of hills and cloughs which comprises the country, rising, northward, from Heywood up to the lofty range of moorlands which divides that part of Lancashire from Rossendale Forest. Up in this remote tract, there is a solitary hamlet, called Grislehurst. To a stranger's eye, the two quaint farmsteads, which are now the sole relics of the hamlet, would be interesting, if only on account of the retired beauty of their situation, and the romantic character of the scenery around. Grislehurst stands on an elevated platform of land, called "Birtle," or "Birkle," the place of birches. It is bounded on the north by the ridge of Ashworth moor, and the lofty mass of Knowl hill; and on the east by Simpson Clough, a deep ravine, about two miles long, running up into the hills. This glen of precipitous crags, and wood-shrouded waters, is chiefly known to those who like rough and lonesome country walks; and to anybody who loves to ramble among such legend-haunted solitudes, a moonlight walk through "Simpson Clough" would be a pleasure not easily forgotten. Grislehurst stands about a stone's throw from the western brink of the clough, and out of the way of common observation. But it is not only the lone charm of its situation which makes this hamlet interesting. Grislehurst is a settlement of the early inhabitants

of the district; and was for some centuries one of the seats of the Holt family, of Grislehurst, Stubley, and Castleton, in this parish; a branch of the Holts of Sale, Ashton, Cheshire. Some of this family fought in the Scottish wars, and also in favour of the royal cause, at Edgehill, Newberry, Marston Moor, &c., and were named in King Charles's projected order of the Royal Oak.* There was a Judge Holt, of the Holts of Sale; and a James Holt, whose mother was co-heiress to Sir James de Sutton; he was killed at Flodden Field. Mary, the daughter of James Holt, the last of the family who resided at Castleton Hall, in this parish, married Samuel, brother of Humphrey Cheetham. The manor of Spotland was granted by Henry VIII. to Thomas Holt, of Grislehurst, who was knighted in Scotland, by Edward, Earl of Hertford, in the thirty-sixth year of the reign of that monarch. The Holts were the principal landowners in the parish of Rochdale at the close of the sixteenth century. What remains of Grislehurst is still associated in the mind with the historic interest which attaches to this once powerful local family. The place is also closely interwoven with some other ancient traditions of the locality, oral and written.† In earlier years, I have often wandered about the woods, and waters, and rocky recesses of this glen, thinking of the tale of the rebel Earl,‡ who is said to have concealed himself, two centuries ago, in a neighbouring clough which bears his name; and, wrapt in a dreamland of my own, sometimes a little tinctured with the wizard lore which lingers among the primitive folk of that quarter. But, in all my walks thereabouts, I had never visited Grislehurst, till this summer afternoon, when, as we sat talking of the place, my curiosity impelled me to propose an evening ramble to the spot; from which we could return, by another route, through Simpson Clough.

We were not quite half an hour's walk from Grislehurst when we started on the north road from Heywood; and the sun was still up in the heavens. Half a mile brought us into Hooley Clough, where the road leads through the village of Hooley Bridge. This village lines the opposite banks of the Roch at that place. Its situation is retired and picturesque. The vale

* Thomas Posthumus Holt, Esq., was one of the intended Knights of the Order of the Royal Oak. According to MS. memorandum, he died 26th March, 1669, "after sown-sett a hower, as they report it."—*Burke's Commoners.*

† See "Tyrone's Bed," in Roby's "Traditions of Lancashire."

‡ The turbulent Earl of Tyrone, who headed the Irish rebellion in the reign of Elizabeth

in which it lies is agreeably adorned with plantations, and the remains of old woods; and the whole scenery is green and pleasant. The village itself has a more orderly and wholesome appearance than any other manufacturing hamlet which I remember. The houses were clean and comfortable-looking, and the roads in fair condition. I noticed that nearly every cottage had its stock of coals piled up under the front window, and open to the street; the "cobs" nearly built up into a square wall, and the centre filled up with the "sleck an' naplins." It struck me that if the people of Manchester were to leave their coals thus free to the world, the course of a single night would "leave not a wreck behind." The whole population of the place is employed by the Fenton family, whose mills stand close to the margin of the river, in the hollow of the clough.

We went up the steep cart road leading out of Hooley Clough towards the north, emerging into the highway from Bury to Rochdale, about a quarter of a mile from the lower end of Simpson Clough, and nearly opposite the lodge of Bamford Hall The country thereabouts is broken into green hills and glens, with patches of old woods, shading the sides of the cloughs. It is bleak and sterile in some parts, and thinly populated, over the whole tract, up to the mountainous moors. As we descended the highway into Simpson Clough, through an opening in the trees, we caught a glimpse of "Makin mill," low down in a green valley to the west. This old mill was the first cotton factory erected in the township of Heap. It was built about 1780, by the firm of Peel, Yates, and Co., and now belongs to Edmund Peel, Esq., brother to the late prime minister. Looking over the northern parapet of the bridge, in the hollow of the road, the deep gully of the clough is filled with a cluster of mills, and the cottages attached to them. Woody heights rise abruptly around, and craggy rocks over-frown this little nest of manufacture, in the bottom of the ravine. We climbed up the steep road, in the direction of Bury, and on reaching the summit, at a place called "Th' Top o'th Wood," we turned off at the end of a row of stone cottages, and went to the right, on a field-path which leads to Grislehurst. Half a mile's walk brought us to two old farm-houses, standing a little apart. We were at a loss to know which of the two, or whether either of them belonged to Grislehurst Hall. The largest took our attention most, on account of some quaint, ornamental masonry built up in its walls; though

evidently not originally belonging to the building. We went round to look at the other side, where similar pieces of ancient masonry were incorporated. The building, though old, was too modern, and had too much barn-like plainness about it to be the hall of the Holts. And then, the country around was all green meadow and pasture; and if this building was not Grislehurst Hall, there was none. I began to think that the land was the most remarkable piece of antiquity about the place. But one part of the west side of this building formed a comfortable cottage residence, the window of which was full of plants, in pots. An hale old man, bareheaded, and in his shirt-sleeves, leaned against the door-cheek, with his arms folded. He was short and broad-set, with fresh complexion and bright eyes; and his firm full features, and stalwart figure, bespoke a life of healthy habits. He wore new fustian breeches, tied with black silk ribbon at the knees. Leaning there, and looking calmly over the fields in the twilight, he eyed us earnestly, as country folk do when strangers wander into their lonely corners. The soft summer evening was sinking beautifully on the quiet landscape, which stretches along the base of Ashworth moor. The old man's countenance had more of country simplicity than force of character in it; yet he was very comely to look upon, and seemed a natural part of the landscape around him; and the hour and the man together, somehow, brought to my mind a graphic line in the book of Genesis, about Isaac going out "to meditate in the field at eventide." After we had sauntered about the place a few minutes—during which the old cottager watched us with a calm but curious eye—we went toward him with the usual salutation about it being a "fine neet," and such like. He melted at once from his statuesque curiosity, and, stepping slowly from the threshold, with his arms folded, replied, "Ay, it is, for sure. . . . Wi'n had grand groo-weather* as week or two. But a sawp o' deawnfo' 'ud do a seet o' good just neaw; an' we'st ha' some afore lung; or aw'm chetted. Owd Knowe† has bin awsin to pŭt hur durty cap on a time or two to-day; an' as soon as hoo can shap to tee it, there'll be wayter amoon us, yo'n see." His dame, hearing the conversation, came forth to see what was going on, and wandered slowly after us down the lane. She

* *Groo-weather*—growing-weather.

† Knowl hill, between Rochdale and Rossendale.

was a strong-built and portly old woman, taller than her husband; and her light-complexioned face beamed with health and simplicity. The evening was mild and still, and the old woman wore no bonnet; nor even the usual kerchief on her head. Her cap and apron were white as new snow, and all her attire looked sound and sweet, though of homely cut and quality. I knew, somehow, that the clothes she wore were scented with lavender or such like herbs, which country folk lay at the bottom of the "kist," for the sake of the aroma which they impart to their clothing. And no king's linen could be more wholesomely perfumed. Give me a well-washed shirt, bleached on a country hedge, and scented with country herbs! The hues of sunset glowed above the lofty moors in front of us, and the stir of day was declining into the rich hum of summer evening. The atmosphere immediately around seemed clearer than when the sun was up; but a shade of hazy gray was creeping over the far east. We lounged along the lane, with the comely dame following us silently, at a distance of three or four yards, wondering what we could be, and why we had wandered into that nook at such a time. After a little talk with the old man, about the hay-crop, the news of the town, and such like, we asked him whether the spot we were upon was Grislehurst; and he replied, "Yo're upo' the very clod."

We then inquired where Grislehurst Hall stood; and whether the building of which his cottage was a part, had been any way connected with it.

He brightened up at the mention of Grislehurst Hall; and, turning sharply round, he said with an air of surprise, "What! dun yo pretend to know aught abeawt Gerzlehus' Ho'? . . . Not mich, aw think; bi'th look on yo."

I told him that all we knew of it was from reading, and from what we had heard about it; and that, happening to be in the neighbourhood, we had wandered up to see if there were any remains of it in existence.

"Ay, well," said he—and as he said it, his tone and manner assumed a touch of greater importance than before—"if that's o' th' arran' yo han, aw deawt yo'n made a lost gate. Noather yo, nor nobory elze needs to look for Gerzlehus' Ho' no more. It's gwon, lung sin! . . . But yo'n let reet for yerrin a bit o' summat abeawt it, if that'll do." He then turned slowly round, and, pointing to a plot of meadow land which abutted

upon a dingle, to the south, he said, "Yo see'n that piece o' meadow lond, at th' edge o'th green hollow theer?"

"Yes."

"Well; that's the spot wheer Gerzlehus' Ho' stoode, when aw're a lad. To look at't neaw, yo wouldn't think at oathur heawse or hut had studd'n upo' that clod; for it's as good a bit o' meadow lond as ever scythe swept. . . . But that's the very spot wheer Gerzlehus' Ho' stoode. An' it're a fine place too, mind yo; once't of a day. There's nought like it upo' this country-side neaw; as heaw 'tis: noather Baemforth Ho', nor noan on 'em. But what, things are very mich awturt sin then. . . . New-fangle't folk, new-fangle't ways, new-fangle't everything. Th' owd ho's gwon neaw, yo see'n; an' th' trees are gwon, 'at stoode abeawt it. The dule steawnd theem at cut 'em deawn, say I!* An' then th' orchart's gwon; an' th' gardens an' o' are gwon; nobbut a twothre at's laft o'eranent this biggin—aw dar say yo see'd 'em as yo coom up—they're morels. . . . An' then, they'n bigged yon new barn upo' th' knowe; an' they'n cut, an' they'n carve't, an' they'n potter't abeawt th' owd place, whol it doesn't look like th' same; it doesn't for sure—not like th' same."

We now asked him again whether the large stone building, in part of which he lived, had belonged to the old hall.

"Ay, well," said he, looking towards it, "that's noan sich a feaw buildin', that isn't. That're part o'th eawt-heawsin to Gerzlehus' Ho'; yo may see. There's a window theer, an' a durhole, an' some moor odd bits abeawt it, of an owdish mak. Yo con happen tay summat fro thoose. But it's divided into different livin's neaw, yo see'n. There's a new farmer lives i'th top end theer. He's made greyt awterations. It's a greadly good heawse i'th inside; if yo see'd through."

"Well," said I, "and what sort of a place was Grislehurst Hall itself?"

"What, Gerzlehus' Ho'?" replied he; "well, aw should know, as hea 'tis; if onybody does. Aw've been a good while upo' th' clod for nought if I dunnut. . . . Ay, thae may laugh; but aw're weel acquainted with this greawn afore thir born, my lad—yers to mo, neaw?"†

* *The dule steawnd theem 'at cut em deawn*—the devil astonish those who cut them down.

† *Yers to mo, neaw?*—hearest thou me, now?

I made some excuse for having smiled, and he went on. "Gerzlehus' Ho' wur a very greyt place, yo may depend. It're mostly built o' heavy oak bauks. . . . There wur ir Jammy lad,* an' me, an' some moor on us—eh, we han carted some of a lot o' loads o' fine timber an' stuff off that spot, at time an' time! An' there's bin a deeol o' good flags, an' sich like, ta'en eawt o'th lond wheer th' heawse stoode; an' eawt o'th hollow below theer—there has so."

"How long is that since?" said I.

The old woman, who had been listening behind us, with her hands clasped under her apron, now stepped up, and said,

"Heaw lung sin? Why, it's aboon fifty year sin. He should know moor nor yo abeawt it, aw guess."

"Ay," said the old man, "aw've known this clod aboon fifty year, for sure. An' see yo," continued he, "there wur a shootin'-butts i' that hollow; sin aw can tell on. And upo' yon green," said he, turning round towards the north, and pointing off at the end of the building, "upo' yon green there stoode an owd sun-dial, i'th middle of a piece o' lond at's bin a chapel-yort, aforetime. They say'n there's graves theer yet. An' upo' that knowe, wheer th' new barn stons, there wur a place o' worship—so th' tale gwos."

It was clear that we had set him going on a favourite theme, and we must, therefore, bide the issue.

Turning his face to the west, he pointed towards a green eminence at a short distance, and said, "To this day they co'n yon hillock 'Th' Castle,' upo' keawnt on there once being a place theer where prisoners were confin't. An' that hee greawnd gwos bi'th name o'th 'Gallows Hill;' what for, I know not."

He then paused, and, pointing to a little hollow near the place where we stood, he slightly lowered his voice as he continued—"An' then, aw reckon yo see'n yon bend i'th lone, wheer th' ash tree stons?"

"Ay."

"Well," said he, "that's the very spot wheer Gerzlehus' Boggart's buried."

My thoughts had so drifted away in another direction, that I was not prepared for such an announcement as this. I was aware that the inhabitants of that district clung to many of the

* *Ir Jammy lad*—our James's son.

superstitions of their forefathers; but the thing came upon me so unexpectedly, and when my mind was so quietly absorbed in dreams of another sort, that, if the old man had fired off a pistol close to my ear, I should not have been much more astonished; though I might have been more startled. All that I had been thinking of vanished at once; and my curiosity was centred in this new phase of the old man's story. I looked into his face to see whether he really meant what he had said; but there it was, sure enough. In every outward feature he endorsed the sincerity of his inward feeling. His countenance was as solemn as an unlettered gravestone.

"Grislehurst Boggart;" said I, looking towards the place once more.

"Ay;" replied he. That's wheer it wur laid low; an' some of a job it wur. Yo happen never yerd on't afore."

The old woman now took up the story, with more earnestness even than her husband.

"It's a good while sin it wur laid; an' there wur a cock buried wi' it, with a stoop* driven through it. It're noan sattle't with a little; aw'll uphowd yo."

"And dun you really think, then," said I, "that this place has been haunted by a boggart?"

"Has bin—be far!" replied she. "It is neaw! Yodd'n soon find it eawt, too, iv yo live't upo' th' spot. It's very mich if it wouldn't may yor yure ston of an end; oathur wi' one marlock or another.† There's noan so mony folk at likes to go deawn yon lone, at after delit,‡ aw con tell yo."

"But, if it's laid and buried," replied I, "it surely doesn't trouble you now."

"Oh, well," said the old woman, "iv it doesn't, it doesn't; so there needs no moor. Aw know some folk winnot believe sich things; there is at'll believe nought at o', iv it isn't fair druvven into 'em, wilto, shalto;§ but this is a different case, mind yo. Eh, never name it; thoose at has it to deeol wi' knows what it is; but thōose at knows nought abeawt sich like—whau, it's like summat an' nought talkin' to 'em abeawt it: so we'n e'en lap it up where it is."

* *Stoop*—a stake; a long piece of pointed wood.
† *Marlock*—a freak; a prank.
‡ *Delit*—daylight.
§ *Wilto, shalto*—by force; against the will.

"Well, well, but stop," said the old man. "Yo say'n 'at it doesn't trouble us neaw. Why, it isn't aboon a fortnit sin th' farmer's wife at the end theer yerd summat i'th deeod time o'th neet; an' hoo wur welly thrut eawt o' bed, too, beside—so then."

"Ah," said the old woman, "sich wark as that's scarrin',* i'th neet time. . . . An' they never could'n find it eawt. But aw know'd what it wur in a minute. Th' farmer's wife an me wur talking it o'er again, yesterday; an' hoo says 'at ever sin it happen't hoo gets quite timmersome as soon as it drays toawrd th' edge o' dark; iv there's nobory i'th heawse but hersel'. . . . Well, an' one wyndy neet—as aw're sittin' bi'th fire—aw yerd summat like a—"

Here the old man interrupted her:—

"It's no use folk tellin' me at they dunnut believe sich like things," said he, seeming not to notice his wife's story; "it's no use tellin' me they dunnut believe it! Th' pranks at it's played abeawt this plaze, at time an' time, would flay ony wick soul to yer tell on."

"Never name it!" said she; "aw know whether they would'n or not. . . . One neet, as aw're sittin by mysel'—"

Her husband interposed again, with an abstracted air:—

"Un-yaukin' th' horses; an' turnin' carts an' things o'er i'th deep neet time; an' shiftin' stuff up and deawn, when folk are i' bed; it's rather flaysome, yo may depend. But then, aw know, there isn't a smite o' sense i' flingin' one's wynt away wi' telling o' sich things, to some folk. . . . It's war nor muckin' wi' sond, an' drainin' wi' cinders."

"And it's buried yonder," said I.

"Ay," replied he, "just i'th hollow: where th' ash tree is. That used to be th' owd road to Rachda, when aw're a lad."

"Do you never think of delving the ground up," said I.

"Delve! nawe," answered he; "aw'st delve noan theer."

The old woman broke in again:—

"Nawe; he'll delve noan theer; nut iv aw know it! Nor no mon else dar lay a finger upo' that clod. Joseph Fenton's† a meeterly bowd chap; an' he's ruvven everything up abeawt this country-side, welly; but he dar not touch Gerzlehus' Boggart, for his skin! An' aw houd his wit good, too, mind yo!"

* *Scarrin*—scaring; terrifying.

† One of the Fenton family who own the land there.

It was useless attempting to unsettle the superstitions of this primitive pair. They were too far gone. And it was, perhaps, best to let the old couple glide on through the evening of their life, untroubled by any ill-timed wrangling.

But the old dame suspected, by our looks, that we were on easy terms with our opinion of the tale; and she said, "Aw dunnot think yo believ'n a wort abeawt it!"

This made us laugh in a way that left little doubt upon the question; and she turned away from us, saying, "Well, yo're weel off iv yo'n nought o' that mak o' yo'r country-side."

We had now got into the fields, in the direction by which we intended to make our way home; and the old people seemed inclined to return to their cottage. We halted, and looked round a few minutes, before parting.

"You've lived here a good while," said I to the old man, "and know all the country round."

"Aw know every fuut o'th greawnd about this part—hill an' hollow, wood and wayter-stid."

"You are getting to a good age, too," continued I.

"Well," said he, "aw'm gettin' boudly on into th' fourth score. Ir breed are a lungish-wynded lot, yo see'n; tak 'em one wi' another."

"You appear to have good health, for your age," said I.

"Well," replied he, "aw ail mich o' nought yet—why, aw'm meyt-whol,* an' sich like; an' aw can do a day-wark wi' some o'th young uns yet—thank God for't. . . . But then aw'st come to't in a bit, yo known—aw'st come too't in a bit. Aw'm so like.† Folk connut expect to ha' youth at both ends o' life, aw guess; an' wi mun o' on us oather owd be, or yung dee, as th' sayin' is."

"It's gettin' time to rest at your age, too."

"Whau; wark's no trouble to me, as lung as aw con do't. Beside, yo see'n, folk at's a dur to keep oppen, connut do't wi'th wynt.‡

"Isn't Grislehurst cold and lonely in winter time?"

"Well; it is—raythe r," said he. "But we dunnot think as mich at it as teawn's-folk would do. . . . It'll be a greyt deeol warse at th' top o' Know hill yon, see yo. It's cowd

* *Meyt-whol*—meat-whole; able to eat his meals.

† *Aw'm so like*—it may naturally be expected that I shall.

‡ *Folk at's a dur to keep oppen, connut do't wi'th wynt*—folk that have a house to maintain, cannot do it with the wind.

enough theer to starve an otter to deeoth, i' winter time. But, here, we're reet enough, for th' matter o' that. An' as for company, we gwon a-neighbourin' a bit, neaw an' then, yo see'n. Beside, we getten to bed sooncr ov a neet nor they dun in a teawn."

"To my thinkin'," said the old woman, "aw wouldn't live in a teawn iv eh mut wear red shoon."

"But you hav'n't many neighbours about here."

"Oh, yigh," said he. "There's th' farmer's theer; and one or two moor. An' then, there's th' 'Top o'th Wood' folk. Then there's 'Hooley Clough,' and th' 'War Office,'*—we can soon get to oathur o' thoose, when we want'n a bit ov an extra do. . . . Oh! ah; we'n plenty o' neighbours! But th' Birtle folk are a deeol on um sib an' sib, rib an' rib—o' ov a litter—Fittons an' Diggles, an' Fittons an' Diggles o'er again. An' wheer dun yo come fro, sen yo?"

We told him.

"Well," said he; "an' are yo i'th buildin' line—at aw mun be so bowd?"

We again explained the motive of our visit.

"Well," said he; "it's nought to me, at aw know on—nobbut aw're thinkin' like. . . . Did'n yo ever see Baemforth Ho', afore it're poo'd deawn?"

"Never."

"Eh, that're a nice owd buildin'! Th' new un hardly comes up to't, i' my e'en—as fine as it is. . . . An' are yo beawn back this gate, then?"

"Ay; we want to go through th' clough."

"Well; yo mun mind heaw yo gwon deawn th' wood-side; for it's a rough gate. So, good neet to yo!"

We bade them both "Good night!" and were walking away, when he shouted back, "Hey! aw say! Dun yo know Ned o' Andrew's?" "No." "He's the very mon for yo! Aw've just unbethought mo! He knows moor cracks nor onybody o' this side—an' he'll sit a fire eawt ony time, tellin' his bits o' tales. Sper ov anybody at Hooley Bridge, an' they'n tell yo wheer he lives. So, good neet to yo!"

Leaving the two old cottagers, and their boggart-haunted hamlet, we went over the fields towards Simpson Clough. The steep sides of this romantic spot are mostly clothed with woods of oak and birch. For nearly a mile's length, the clough is divided into

* *Th' War Office*—a name applied to the village of Bamford.

two ravines, deep, narrow, and often craggy—and shady with trees. Two streams flow down from the moors above, each through one of these gloomy defiles, till they unite at a place from whence the clough continues its way southward, in one wider and less shrouded expanse, but still between steep and rocky banks, partly wooded. When the rains are heavy upon the moors, these streams rush furiously through their rock-bound courses in the narrow ravines, incapable of mischief, till they meet at the point where the clough becomes one, when they thence form a strong and impetuous torrent, which has, sometimes, proved destructive to property lower down the valley. Coming to the western brink of this clough, we skirted along in search of an opening by which we could go down into it with the least difficulty. A little removed from the eastern edge, and nearly opposite to us, stood Bamford new hall, the residence of James Fenton, Esq., one of the wealthy cotton-spinners in this locality. A few yards from that mansion, and nearer to the edge of the clough, stood, a few years ago, the venerable hall of the Bamfords of Bamford, one of the oldest families belonging to the old local gentry; and, probably, among the first Saxon settlers there. Thomas de Bamford occurs about 1193. Adam de Bamford granted land in villa de Bury, to William de Chadwick, in 1413; and Sir John Bamford was a fellow of the Collegiate Church of Manchester, in 1506.* A William Bamford, Esq., of Bamford, served the office of High Sheriff of the county, in 1787. He married Ann, daughter of Thomas Blackburne, Esq., of Orford and Hale, and was father of Ann, lady of John Ireland Blackburne, Esq., M.P. He was succeeded by Robert Bamford, Esq., who, from his connection with the Hesketh's of Cheshire, took the name of Robert Bamford Hesketh, Esq., and married Miss Frances Lloyd, of Gwrych Castle. Lloyd Hesketh Bamford Hesketh, Esq., of Gwrych Castle, Denbighshire, married Emily Esther Ann, youngest daughter of Earl Beauchamp.† The old hall of the Bamfords was taken down a few years ago. I do not remember ever seeing it myself, but the following particulars respecting it have been kindly furnished to me by a native gentleman, who knew it well:—"It was a fine old building of the Tudor style, with three gables in front, which looked towards the high road; it was of light-coloured ashler stone, such as is found in the

* *Hollingworth's Mancuniensis*, Willis's edition, p. 53.
† Court Magazine, vol. 8, No. 45.

neighbourhood; with mullions, and quaint windows and doors to match; and was, I think, dated about 1521. Such another building you will certainly not find on this side of the county. Castleton Hall comes, in my opinion, nearest to it in venerable appearance; but Bamford Hall had a lighter and more cheerful aspect; its situation, also, almost on the edge of the rocky chasm of Simpson Clough, or, as it is often called, Guestless, *i.e.* Grislehurst Clough, gave an air of romance to the place, which I do not remember to have noticed about any ancient residence with which I am acquainted."

Stillness was falling upon the scene; but the evening wind sung lulling vespers in Grislehurst wood; and, now and then, there rose from the rustling green, the silvery solo of some lingering singer in those leafy choirs, as we worked our way through the shade of the wood, until we came to the bed of "Nadin Water," in the shrouded hollow of the clough. The season had been dry, and the water lay in quiet pools of the channel,—gleaming in the gloom, where the light fell through the trees. We made our way onward, sometimes leaping from stone to stone in the bed of the stream, sometimes tearing over the lower part of the bank, which was broken and irregular, and scattered with moss-greened fragments of fallen rock, or slippery and swampy with lodgments of damp, fed by rindles and driblets of water, running more or less, in all seasons, from springs in the wood-shaded steep. In some parts, the bank was overgrown with scratchy thickets, composed of dogberry-stalks, wild rose-bushes, prickly hollins and thorns, young hazles and ash trees; broad-leaved docks, and tall, drooping ferns; and, over all, hung the thick green of the spreading wood. Pushing aside the branches, we laboured on till we came into the opening where the streams combine. A stone bridge crosses the water at this spot, leading up to the woody ridge which separates the two ravines, in the upper part of the clough. Here we climbed from the bed of the stream, and got upon a cart-road which led out of the clough, and up to the Rochdale road, which crosses the lower end of it, at a considerable elevation. The thin crescent of a new moon's rim hung like a silver sickle in the sky; and the stars were beginning to glow in "Jove's eternal house!" whilst the fading world below seemed hushed with awe, to see that sprinkling of golden lights coming

out in silence once more from the over-spanning blue. We walked up the slope, from the silent hollow, between the woods, and over the knoll, and down into Hooley Clough again, by the way we came at first. Country people were sauntering about, upon the main road, and in the bye-lanes, thereabouts, in twos and threes. In the village of Hooley Bridge, the inhabitants were lounging at their cottage doors, in neighbourly talk, enjoying the close of a summer day; and, probably, "Ned o' Andrew's" was sitting in some quiet corner of the village, amusing a circle of eager listeners with his quaint country tales.

A short walk brought us to the end of our ramble, and we sat down to talk over what we had seen and heard. My visit to Grislehurst had been all the more interesting that I had no thought of meeting with such a living evidence of the lingering superstitions of Lancashire there. I used to like to sit with country folk, hearkening to their old-world tales of boggarts, and goblins, and fairies,

> That plat the manes of horses in the night,
> And cake the elf lock in foul, sluttish airs;

and I had thought myself well acquainted with the boggart-lore of my native district; but the goblin of Grislehurst was new to me. By this time I knew that in remote country houses the song of the cricket and the ticking of the clock were beginning to be distinctly heard; and that in many a solitary cottage these were, now, almost the only sounds astir, except the cadences of the night wind, sighing around, and making every crevice into a voice of mystic import to superstitious listeners; while, perhaps, the rustle of the trees blended with the dreamy ripple of some neighbouring brooklet. The shades of night would, by this time, have fallen upon the haunted homesteads of Grislehurst, and, in the folds of that dusky robe, would have brought to the old cottagers their usual fears, filled with

> Shaping fantasies, that apprehend
> More than cool reason ever comprehends;

and I could imagine the good old pair creeping off to repose, and covering up their eyes more carefully than usual from the goblin-peopled gloom, after the talk we had with them about Grislehurst Boggart.

Boggart Ho' Clough.

Under the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither;
Here we shall see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.
—SHAKSPERE.

THERE is a quiet little clough about three miles from Manchester, near the old village of Blackley. The best entrance to it is by a gateway leading from the southern edge of a shady steep called "Entwisle Broo," on the highway from Manchester to Middleton. Approaching the spot in this direction, a winding road leads down between a low bemossed wall on the right, and a thorn hedge, which screens the green depth on the left. The trees which line the path overlap the way with shade in summer time, till it reaches the open hollow, where stands a brick-built farm-house, with its outbuildings, and gardens,—sheltered in the rear by the wooded bank of the clough. Thence, this pretty Lancashire dell wanders on southward for a considerable distance, in picturesque quietude. The township of Blackley, in which it is situated, retains many traces of its former rural beauty, and some remnants of the woods which once covered the district. As a whole, Blackley is, even yet, so pleasantly varied in natural feature as to rank among the prettiest scenery around Manchester, although its valleys are now, almost all of them, more or less, surrendered to

the conquering march of manufacture—all, except this secluded glen, known by the name of "Boggart Ho' Clough." Here, still, in this sylvan "deer-leap" of the Saxon hunter, the lover of nature, and the jaded townsman, have a tranquil sanctuary, where they can wander, cloistered from the tumults of life; and there is many a contemplative rambler who seeks the retirement of this leafy dell, the whole aspect of which seems to invite the mind to a "sessions of sweet, silent thought." One can imagine it such a place as a man of poetic temperament would delight in; and the interest which has gathered around it is not lessened by the fact, that before Samuel Bamford, the poet, left this district to take up his abode in the metropolis, he dwelt at a pleasant cottage, on the summit of the upland, near the eastern edge of the clough. And here, in his native sequestration, he may have sometimes felt the significance of Burns's words,—

> The muse, nae poet ever fand her,
> Till by himsel' he learn'd to wander,
> Down by some streamlet's sweet meander,
> And no think lang.

The rural charms and retired peacefulness of "Boggart Ho' Clough" might well, in the vicinity of a place like Manchester, account for part of its local celebrity; but not for the whole of it. The superstitions of the locality and the shaping power of imagination have clothed the place with an interest which does not solely belong to the embowered gloom of its green recesses,; nor to its picturesque steeps, overgrown with fern and underwood; nor to the beauty of its swardy holm, spreading out a pleasant space in the vale; nor to the wimpling rill which wanders through it from end to end,

> Amongst the pumy stones, which seem to plaine,
> With gentle murmure, that his course they do restraine.

Man has clothed the scene in a drapery of wonder and fear, woven in the creative loom of his own imagination. Any superstitious stranger, wandering there, alone, under the influence of a midnight moon, would probably think this a likely place for the resort of those spiritual beings who "fly by night." He might truly say, at such an hour, that if ever "Mab" held court on the green earth, "Boggart Ho' Clough" is just such

a nook, as one can imagine, that her mystic choir would delight to dance in, and sing,—

> Come, follow, follow me,
> Ye fairy elves that be,
> Light tripping o'er the green,
> Come follow Mab, your queen;
> Hand in hand we'll dance around,
> For this place is fairy ground.

The place is now associated with the superstitions of the district; and on that account, as well as on account of its natural attractions, it has been the theme of more than one notable pen. In Roby's "Traditions of Lancashire," there is a story called "The Bargaist, or Boggart," which is connected with "Boggart Ho' Clough." From this story, which was contributed to that work by Mr. Crofton Croker, author of "The Fairy Legends," I quote the following:—

"Not far from the little snug, smoky village of Blakeley, or Blackley, there lies one of the most romantic of dells, rejoicing in a state of singular seclusion, and in the oddest of Lancashire names, to wit, 'Boggart-Hole.' Rich in every requisite for picturesque beauty and poetical association, it is impossible for me (who am neither a painter nor a poet) to describe this dell as it should be described; and I will, therefore, only beg of thee, gentle reader, who, peradventure, mayst not have lingered in this classical neighbourhood, to fancy a deep, deep dell, its steep sides fringed down with hazel and beech, and fern and thick undergrowth, and clothed at the bottom with the richest and greenest sward in the world. You descend, clinging to the trees, and scrambling as best you may,—and now you stand on haunted ground! Tread softly, for this is the Boggart's clough. And see in yonder dark corner, and beneath the projecting mossy stone, where that dusky, sullen cave yawns before us, like a bit of Salvator's best: there lurks that strange elf, the sly and mischievous Boggart. Bounce! I see him coming;—oh no, it was only a hare bounding from her form; there it goes—there!

"I will tell you of some of the pranks of this very Boggart, and how he teased and tormented a good farmer's family in a house hard by; and I assure you it was a very worthy old lady who told me the story. But, first, suppose we leave the Boggart's demesne, and pay a visit to the theatre of his strange doings.

"You see that old farm-house about two fields distant, shaded by the sycamore tree: that was the spot which the Boggart or

Bar-gaist selected for his freaks; there he held his revels, perplexing honest George Cheetham—for that was the farmer's name—scaring his maids, worrying his men, and frightening the poor children out of their seven senses; so that, at last, not even a mouse durst show himself indoors at the farm, as he valued his whiskers, five minutes after the clock had struck twelve."

The story goes on describing the startling pranks of this invisible torment of honest George Cheetham's old haunted dwelling. It tells how that the Boggart, which was a long time a terror to the farmer's family, "scaring the maids, worrying the men, and frightening the poor children," became at last a familiar, mysterious presence—in a certain sense, a recognised member of the household troop—often heard, but never seen; and sometimes a sharer in the household conversation. When merry tales were being told around the fire, on winter nights, the Boggart's "small, shrill voice, heard above the rest, like a baby's penny trumpet," joined the general laughter, in a tone of supernatural congeniality; and the hearers learned, at last, to hear without dismay, if not to love the sounds which they had feared before. But Boggarts, like men, are moody creatures; and this unembodied troubler of the farmer's lonely house seems to have been sometimes so forgetful of everything like spiritual dignity, or even of the claims of old acquaintance, as to reply to the familiar banter of his mortal co-tenants, in a tone of petty malignity. He even went so far, at last, as to revenge himself for some fancied insult, by industriously pulling the children up and down by the head and legs in the night time, and by screeching and laughing plaguily in the dark, to the unspeakable annoyance of the inmates. In order to get rid of this nocturnal torment, it appears that the farmer removed his children into other sleeping apartments, leaving the Boggart sole tenant of their old bedroom, which seems to have been his favourite stage of action. The story concludes as follows:—

"But his Boggartship, having now fairly become the possessor of a room at the farm, it would appear, considered himself in the light of a privileged inmate, and not, as hitherto, an occasional visitor, who merely joined in the general expression of merriment. Familiarity, they say, breeds contempt; and now the children's bread and butter would be snatched away, or their porringers of bread and milk would be dashed to the ground by an unseen hand; or, if the younger ones were left alone but for a few minutes, they were sure to be found screaming with terror on

the return of their nurse. Sometimes, however, he would behave himself kindly. The cream was then churned, and the pans and kettles scoured without hands. There was one circumstance which was remarkable:—the stairs ascended from the kitchen; a partition of boards covered the ends of the steps, and formed a closet beneath the staircase. From one of the boards of this partition a large round knot was accidentally displaced; and one day the youngest of the children, while playing with the shoe-horn, stuck it into this knot-hole. Whether or not the aperture had been formed by the Boggart as a peep-hole to watch the motions of the family, I cannot pretend to say. Some thought it was, for it was called the Boggart's peep-hole; but others said that they had remembered it long before the shrill laugh of the Boggart was heard in the house. However this may have been, it is certain that the horn was ejected with surprising precision at the head of whoever put it there; and either in mirth or in anger the horn was darted forth with great velocity, and struck the poor child over the ear.

"There are few matters upon which parents feel more acutely than that of the maltreatment of their offspring; but time, that great soother of all things, at length familiarised this dangerous occurrence to every one at the farm, and that which at the first was regarded with the utmost terror, became a kind of amusement with the more thoughtless and daring of the family. Often was the horn slipped slyly into the hole, and in return it never failed to be flung at the head of some one, but most commonly at the person who placed it there. They were used to call this pastime, in the provincial dialect, 'laking wi't' Boggart;' that is playing with the Boggart. An old tailor, whom I but faintly remember, used to say that the horn was often 'pitched' at his head, and at the head of his apprentice, whilst seated here on the kitchen table, when they went their rounds to work, as is customary with country tailors. At length the goblin, not contented with flinging the horn, returned to his night persecutions. Heavy steps, as of a person in wooden clogs, were at first heard clattering down stairs in the dead hour of darkness; then the pewter and earthen dishes appeared to be dashed on the kitchen floor; though in the morning all remained uninjured on their respective shelves. The children generally were marked out as objects of dislike by their unearthly tormentor. The curtains of their beds would be violently pulled to and fro; then a heavy weight, as of a human

being, would press them nigh to suffocation, from which it was impossible to escape. The night, instead of being the time for repose, was disturbed with screams and dreadful noises, and thus was the whole house alarmed night after night. Things could not long continue in this fashion; the farmer and his good dame resolved to leave a place where they could no longer expect rest or comfort; and George Cheetham was actually following, with his wife and family, the last load of furniture, when they were met by a neighbouring farmer, named John Marshall.

"'Well, Georgy, and so yo're leaving th' owd house at last?' said Marshall.

"'Heigh, Johnny, my lad, I'm in a manner forced to't, thou sees,' replied the other; 'for that weary Boggart torments us so, we can neither rest neet nor day for't. It seems like to have a malice again't young uns, an' ommost kills my poor dame here at thoughts on't, and so thou sees we're forc'd to flit like.'

"He had got thus far in his complaint, when, behold, a shrill voice, from a deep upright churn, the topmost utensil on the cart, called out, 'Ay, ay, neighbour, we're flitting, yo see.'

"'Od rot thee,' exclaimed George: 'if I'd known thou'd been flitting too, I wadn't ha' stirred a peg. Nay, nay, it's to no use, Mally,' he continued, turning to his wife, 'we may as weel turn back again to th' owd house, as be tormented in another not so convenient.'"

Thus endeth Crofton Croker's tradition of the "Boggart," or "Bar-gaist," which, according to the story, was long time a well-known supernatural pest of old Cheetham's farm-house, but whose principal lurking place was supposed to be in a gloomy nook of "Boggart Ho' Clough," or "Boggart Hole Clough," for the name adopted by the writer of the tradition appears to be derived from that superstitious belief. With respect to the exact origin of the name, however, I must entirely defer to those who know more about the matter than myself. The features of the story are, generically, the same as those of a thousand such like superstitious stories still told and believed in all the country parts of England—though perhaps more in the northern part of it than elsewhere. Almost every lad in Lancashire has, in his childhood, heard, either from his "reverend grannie," or from some less kin and less kind director of his young imagination, similar tales connected with old houses, and other haunts, in the neighbourhood of his own birthplace.

Among those who have noticed "Boggart Ho' Clough," is Mr. Samuel Bamford, well known as a poet, and a graphic prose writer upon the stormy political events of his earlier life, and upon whatever relates to the manners and customs of Lancashire. In describing matters of the latter kind, he has the advantage of being "native and to the manner born;" and still more specially so in everything connected with the social peculiarities of the locality of his birth. He was born at Middleton, about two miles from "Boggart Ho' Clough," and, as I said before, he resided for some years close to the clough itself. In his "Passages in the Life of a Radical," vol. I. p. 130, there begins one of the raciest descriptions of Lancashire characteristics with which I am acquainted. The first part of this passage contains a descriptive account of "Plant," a country botanist; "Chirrup," a bird-catcher; and "Bangle," a youth "of an ardent temperament, but bashful," who was deeply in love with "a young beauty residing in the house of her father, who held a small milk-farm on the hill-side, not far from Old Birkle." It describes the meeting of the three in the lone cottage of Bangle's mother, near Grislehurst wood; the conversation that took place there; and the superstitious adventure they agreed upon, in order to deliver young Bangle from the hopelessness of his irresistible and unrequited love-thrall. "His modest approaches had not been noticed by the adored one; and, as she had danced with another youth at Bury fair, he imagined she was irrecoverably lost to him, and the persuasion had almost driven him melancholy. Doctors had been applied to, but he was no better; philters and charms had been tried to bring down the cold-hearted maid—but all in vain:—

> "He sought her at the dawn of day;
> He sought her at the noonin';
> He sought her when the evening gray
> Had brought the hollow moon in.
>
> "He call'd her on the darkest night,
> With wizard spells to bind her:
> And when the stars arose in light,
> He wandered forth to find her.

"At length sorcerers and fortune-tellers were thought of, and 'Limping Billy,' a noted seer, residing at Radcliffe Bridge, having been consulted, said the lad had no chance of gaining power over the damsel, unless he could take Saint John's Fern seed; and if he could but secure three grains of that, he might bring to him whatever he wished, that walked, flew, or swam."

Such being the conditions laid down, and believed in by the three, they resolved to venture, together, on the taking of Saint John's Fern seed, with strict observance of the time and the cabalistic ceremonials enjoined by "Limping Billy," the seer, of Radcliffe Bridge. "Plant," the botanist, "knew where the finest clump of fern in the country grew;" and he undertook to accompany "Chirrup" and "Bangle" to the spot, at the time appointed, the eve of St. John the Baptist. The remainder of the passage describes "Boggart Ho' Clough," the spot in which St. John's Fern then grew in great abundance, and where the botanists of the district still find the plant; it describes, also, the fearful enterprise of the three at the witching hour of midnight, in search of the enchanted seed:—

"On the left hand, reader, as thou goest towards Manchester, ascending from Blackley, is a rather deep valley, green swarded, and embowered in plantations and older woods. A driving path, which thou enterest by a white gate hung on whale-jaw posts,* leads down to a grove of young trees, by a modern and substantial farm-house, with green shutters, sashed windows, and flowers peeping from the sills. A mantle of ivy climbs the wall, a garden is in front, and an orchard, redolent of bloom, and fruit in season, nods on the hill-top above. Here, at the time Plant was speaking of, stood a very ancient house, built partly of old-fashioned bricks, and partly of a timber frame, filled with raddlings and daub (wicker-work plastered with clay). It was a lone and desolate-looking house indeed; misty and fearful, even at noonday. It was known as 'Boggart-ho',' or 'Fyrin'-ho';' and the gorge in which it is situated, was, and is still, known as 'Boggart' or 'Fyrin-ho' Kloof,' 'the glen of the hall of spirits.' Such a place, might we suppose, had Milton in contemplation, when he wrote the passage of his inimitable poem:—

> "Tells how the drudging goblin sweat,
> To earn his cream-bowl, duly set,
> When, in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
> His shadowy flail had thrash'd the corn
> Which ten day-labourers could not end;
> Then lies him down, the lubber fiend:
> And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
> Basks at the fire, his hairy strength;
> And cropful, out of door he flings,
> Ere the first cock his matin sings.

* Those somewhat remarkable posts have been removed of late years, and stout pillars of stone occupy their places.

"By the side of the house, and through the whole length of the valley, wends a sickly, tan-coloured rindle, which, issuing from the great White Moss, comes down, tinged with the colour of its parent swamp. Opposite the modern house, a forbidden road cuts through the plantation on the right towards Moston Lane. Another path leads behind the house, up precipitous banks, and through close bowers, to Booth Hall; and a third, the main one, proceeds along the kloof, by the side of the stream, and under sun-screening woods, until it forks into two roads: one a cattle-track, to 'The Bell,' in Moston; and the other a winding and precipitous footpath, to a farm-house at 'Wood-end,' where it gains the broad upland, and emerges into unshaded day.

"About half way up this kloof, is an open, cleared space of green and short sward: it is probably two hundred yards in length, by sixty in width; and passing along it from Blackley, a group of fine oaks appear, on a slight eminence, a little to the left. This part of the grove was, at the time we are concerned with, much more crowded with underwood than at present.* The bushes were then close and strong; fine sprouts of 'yerth-groon' hazel and ash were common as nuts; whilst a thick bush of bramble, wild rose, and holly, gave the spot the appearance of a place inclosed and set apart for mysterious concealment. Intermingled with these almost impervious barriers, where tufts of tall green fern, curling and bending gracefully; and a little separate from them and near the old oaks, might be observed a few fern clumps of a singular appearance; of a paler green than the others—with a flatter and a broader leaf—sticking up, rigid and expanded, like something stark with mute terror. These were 'Saint John's Fern;' and the finest of them was the one selected by Plant for the experiment now to be described.

"A little before midnight, on the eve of St. John, Plant, Chirrup, and Bangle, where at the whale-jaw gate before-mentioned; and, having slightly scanned each other, they proceeded, without speaking, until they had crossed the brook at a stepping-place, opposite the old Fyrin-ho'. The first word spoken was—'What hast thou?'

"'Mine is breawn an' roof,'

* Those oaks have been felled, and the kloof is now comparatively denuded of timber; the underwood on the left side is nearly swept away. Sad inroads on the ominous gloom of the place.

said Plant, exhibiting a brown earthern dish. 'What hast thou?' he then asked.

"'Mine is breet enough,'

said Chirrup, showing a pewter platter, and continued, "What hast thou?'

"'Teed wi' web an' woof,
Mine is deep enough,'

said Bangle, displaying a musty, dun skull, with the cap sawn off above the eyes, and left flapping like a lid by a piece of tanned scalp, which still adhered. The interior cavities had also been stuffed with moss and lined with clay, kneaded with blood from human veins, and the youth had secured the skull to his shoulders by a twine of three strands of unbleached flax, of undyed wool, and of woman's hair, from which also depended a raven black tress, which a wily crone had procured from the maid he sought to obtain.

"'That will do,'

said a voice, in a half whisper, from one of the low bushes they were passing. Plant and Chirrup paused; but Bangle, who had evidently his heart on the accomplishment of the undertaking, said, 'Forward!—if we turn, now a spirit has spoken, we are lost. Come on!' and they went forward.

"A silence, like that of death, was around them as they entered on the opening platting. Nothing moved either in tree or brake. Through a space in the foliage, the stars were seen pale in heaven, and a crooked moon hung in a bit of blue amid motionless clouds. All was still and breathless, as if earth, heaven, and the elements, were aghast. Anything would have been preferable to that unnatural stillness and silence—the hoot of the night owl, the larum of the pit sparrow, the moan of the wind, the toll of a death-bell, or the howl of a ban-dog, would, inasmuch as they are things of this world, have been welcome sounds amid that horrid pause. But no sound came and no object moved.

"Gasping, and with cold sweat oozing on his brow, Plant recollected that they were to shake the fern with a forked rod of witch hazel, and by no means must touch it with their hands, and he asked, in a whisper, if the others had brought one. Both said they had forgotten, and Chirrup said they had better never have come; but Plant drew his knife, and stepping into a moonlighted bush, soon returned with what was wanted, and they went forward.

"The green knowe, the old oaks, the encircled space, and the fern, were now approached; the latter stiff and erect in a gleamy light.

"'Is it deep neet?' said Bangle.

"'It is,' said Plant.

> The star that bids the shepherd fold,
> Now the top of heaven doth hold.

"And they drew near. All was still and motionless.

"Plant knelt on one knee, and held his dish under the fern.

"Chirrup held his broad plate next below, and

"Bangle knelt, and rested the skull directly under both on the green sod; the lid being up.

"Plant said,—

> 'Good St. John, this seed we crave,
> We have dared; shall we have?'

"A voice responded:—

> 'Now the moon is downward starting,
> Moon and stars are all departing;
> Quick, quick; shake, shake;
> He whose heart shall soonest break,
> Let him take.'

"They looked, and perceived by a glance that a venerable form, in a loose robe, was near them.

"Darkness came down like a swoop. The fern was shaken, the upper dish flew into pieces—the pewter one melted; the skull emitted a cry, and eyes glared in its sockets; lights broke—beautiful children were seen walking in their holiday clothes, and graceful female forms sung mournful and enchanting airs.

"The men stood terrified, and fascinated; and Bangle, gazing, bade, 'God bless 'em.' A crash followed as if the whole of the timber in the kloof was being splintered and torn up; strange and horrid forms appeared from the thickets; the men ran as if sped on the wind—they separated, and lost each other. Plant ran towards the old house, and there, leaping the brook, he cast a glance behind him, and saw terrific shapes—some beastly, some part human, and some hellish, gnashing their teeth, and howling, and uttering the most fearful and mournful tones, as if wishful to follow him but unable to do so.

"In an agony of terror he arrived at home, not knowing how he got there. He was, during several days, in a state bordering on unconsciousness; and, when he recovered, he learned that

Chirrup was found on the White Moss, raving mad, and chasing the wild birds. As for poor Bangle, he found his way home over hedge and ditch, running with supernatural and fearful speed—the skull's eyes glaring at his back, and the nether jaw grinning and jabbering frightful and unintelligible sounds. He had preserved the seed, however, and, having taken it from the skull, he buried the latter at the cross road from whence he had taken it. He then carried the spell out, and his proud love stood one night by his bed-side in tears. But he had done too much for human nature—in three months after she followed his corpse, a real mourner, to the grave!

"Such was the description my fellow-prisoner gave of what occurred in the only trial he ever made with St. John's Fern seed. He was full of old and quaint narratives, and of superstitious lore, and often would beguile time by recounting them. Poor follow! a mysterious fate hung over him also."

This description of "Boggart Ho' Clough," with its dramatic embodiment of one of our strong local superstitions, is all the more interesting from the pen of one who knew the place and the people so well. I know no other writer who is so able to portray the distinctive characteristics of the people of South Lancashire as Samuel Bamford.

It is now some years since I visited the scene of the foregoing traditions. At that time I was wholly unacquainted with the last of these legends, and I knew little more about "Boggart Ho' Clough," in any way, than its name indicates. I sought the place, then, solely on account of its natural attractions. Feeling curious, however, respecting the import of its name, and dimly remembering Roby's tradition, I made some inquiry in the neighbourhood, and found that, although some attributed the name to the superstitious credulity of the native people, there was one gentleman who nearly destroyed that theory in my mind at the time, by saying that, a short time previous, he had dined with a lawyer who informed him, in the course of a conversation upon the same subject, that he had recently been at a loss how to describe the place in question, having to prepare some notices to be served on trespassers; and, on referring to the title-deeds of the property, he found that a family of the name of "Bowker" had formerly occupied a residence situated in the clough, and that their dwelling was designated "Bowker's Hall." This he adopted as the origin of the name, and described it

accordingly. But the testimony of every writer who notices the spot, especially those best acquainted with it, inclines to the other derivation.

But the locality has other points of interest, besides this romantic nook, and the tales of glamour connected with it. In it there is many a boggart story, brought down from the past, many a spot of fearful repute among native people. Apart from all these things, the chapelry of Blackley is enriched with historic associations well worth remembering, and it contains some interesting relics of the ancient manner of life there. In former times the chapelry had in it several fine old halls: Booth Hall, Nuthurst Hall, Lightbowne Hall, Hough Hall, Crumpsall Hall, and Blackley Hall. Some of these still remain. Some of them have been the homes or the birthplaces of men of eminence in their day—eminent for worth as well as station—among whom there is more than one who has left a long trail of honourable recollections behind him. Such men were Humphrey Chetham, Bishop Oldham, and others. Bradford the martyr, also, is said to have resided in this township. William Chadderton, D.D., Bishop of Chester, and afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, was born at Nuthurst Hall, about the year 1540. George Clarke, the founder of the charity which bears his name, and one of Fuller's Worthies, resided in Crumpsall. The following particulars respecting the district and its notabilities I glean from the recently-published "History of the Ancient Chapel of Blackley," by the Rev. John Booker, B.A., of Magdalene College, Cambridge, curate of Prestwich. First, with respect to the ancient state of Blackley, in the survey of Manchester, as taken in the 15th Edward II. (1322), and preserved by Kuerden,* the following official notice of the township occurs:—"The park of Blakeley is worth, in pannage, aëry of eagles, herons and hawks, honey-bees, mineral earths, ashes, and other issues, fifty-three shillings and fourpence. The vesture of oaks, with the whole coverture, is worth two hundred marks [£133. 6s. 8d.] in the gross. It contains seven miles in circumference, together with two deer-leaps, of the king's grant." This short but significant passage is sufficient to give the reader a glimpse of the appearance of Blackley township five hundred years ago. From the same authority, we learn that Blackley park (seven miles in

* Kuerden's MS., fol. 274, Chetham Library.

circumference) was, at that time, surrounded and fenced in by a wooden paling. "The two 'deer-leaps' were probably cloughs or ravines, of which the most remarkable is the 'Boggart Hole Clough,' a long cleft or dell between two rocks, the sides of which rise abruptly and leave a narrow pass, widening a little here and there, through which flows a small brook. This is the last stronghold of Blackley's ancient characteristic features, where rural tranquility still reigns, free from the bustle and turmoil of mercantile industry around it."

The following particulars respecting the etymology of the name "Blackley," will not be unacceptable to students of language:—"Its etymology is yet a disputed point, owing to the various significations of the Anglo-Saxon word, *blac*, *blæc*, *bleac*, which means not only *black*, *dark*, *opaque*, and even *gloomy*, but also *pale*, *faded*, *pallid*, from 'blæcan,' to bleach or make white. And, as if these opposite meanings were not sufficiently perplexing, two other forms present themselves, one of which means *bleak*, *cold*, *bare*, and the other *yellow;* the latter syllable in the name, *ley*, *legh*, *leag*, or *leah*, signifying a *field* or place of *pasture*." On this point, Whittaker says, in his "History of Manchester," "The Saxon *blac*, *black*, or *blake*, frequently imports the deep gloom of trees; hence we have so many places distinguished by the epithet in England, where no circumstances of soil and no peculiarities of water give occasion to it, as the villages of Blackburn and Blackrode in Lancashire, Blakeley-hurst, near Wigan, and our own Blackley, near Manchester; and the woods of the last were even seven miles in circuit as late as the fourteenth century.

"Leland, who wrote about the year 1538, bears testimony to the unaltered aspect of Blackley, under the influence of cultivation, and to the changes incident to the disafforesting of its ancient woodlands. He says:—'Wild bores, bulles, and falcons, bredde in times past at Blakele, now for lack of woode the blow-shoppes decay there.'*

"Blackley had its resident minister as early as the reign of Edward VI., in the person of Father Travis, a name handed down to us in the pages of Fox and Strype. Travis was the friend and correspondent of Bradford the martyr. In the succeeding reign he suffered banishment for his Protestant principles, and his place was probably supplied by a papist."

* Leland's "Itinerary" (Hearne's edit.), vol. vii. p. 42.

The site upon which, in 1815, stood the old hall of Blackley, is now occupied by a print-shop. Blackley Hall "was a spacious black-and-white half-timbered mansion, in the post and petrel style, and was situated near to the junction of the lane leading to the chapel and the Manchester and Rochdale turnpike road. It was a structure of considerable antiquity, and consisted of a centre and two projecting wings—an arrangement frequently met with in the ancient manor-houses of this county—and bore evidence of having been erected at two periods.

"Like most other houses of similar pretensions and antiquity, it was not without its traditionary legends, and the *boggart* of Blackley Hall was as well known as Blackley Hall itself. In the stillness of the night it would steal from room to room, and carry off the bedclothes from the couches of the sleeping, but now thoroughly aroused and discomfited inmates."*

The township of Crumpsall bounds Blackley on the north side, and is divided from it by the lively but now turbid little river Irk, or Iwrke, or Irke, which means "Roebuck." "From time immemorial, for ecclesiastical purposes, Crumpsall has been associated with Blackley." The present Crumpsall Hall stands on the north side of the Irk, about a mile and a half from "Boggart Ho' Clough." The earlier orthography of the name was "Crumeshall, or Curmeshall. For its derivation we are referred to the Anglo-Saxon, the final syllable 'sal' signifying in that language a hall or place of entertainment, of which hospitable abode the Saxon chief, whose name the first syllable indicates, was the early proprietor. Thus, too, Ordsall in the same parish." Here, in later days, Humphrey Chetham was born, at Crumpsall old hall. The author of the "History of the Ancient Chapel of Blackley," from whose book I gather all this information, also describes an old farm-house, situated in a picturesque spot, in the higher part of Crumpsall, and pointed

* The following note is attached to this passage in Mr. Booker's volume:—"The annals of Blackley bear ample testimony to the superstition of its inhabitants. It has had its nine days' wonder at every period of its history. Hollingworth, writing of that age of portents and prodigies which succeeded the Reformation, says:—'In Blackley, neere Manchester, in one John Pendleton's ground, as one was reaping, the corne being cut seemed to bleede; drops fell out of it like to bloud; multitudes of people went to see it: and the straws thereof, though of a kindly colour without, were within reddish, and as it were bloudy!' Boggart-hole Clough, too, was another favourite haunt of ghostly visitants, the legend of which has been perpetuated by Mr. Roby in his "Traditions of Lancashire," vol. 2, pp. 295, 391. Nor has it ceased in our day: in 1852 one of its inhabitants imperilled the safety of his family and neighbours, by undermining the walls of his cottage, in his efforts to discover the hidden cause of some mysterious noise that had disturbed him."

out as the dwelling in which Hugh Oldham, Bishop of Exeter, who founded the Manchester Grammar School, was born. About four years ago, when rambling about the green uplands of Crumpsall, I called at this farm to see a friend of mine, who lived in a cottage at the back of the house. While there I was shown through this curious old dwelling; and I remember that the tenants took especial pains to acquaint me with its local importance, as the place of Bishop Oldham's nativity. It is still known as "Oldham's tenement," and also as "Th' Bongs (Banks) Farm." The following is a more detailed account of the place, and the man:—

"It is celebrated as the reputed birthplace of Hugh Oldham, Bishop of Exeter, who, according to tradition current in the neighbourhood, was born there about the middle of the fifteenth century, and it is stated to have been the residence of the Oldhams for the last four hundred years. The house itself—a long narrow thatched building—bears evidence of considerable antiquity; the walls appear to have been originally of lath and plaster, which material has gradually, in many places, given place to brick-work; and the whole exterior is now covered with whitewash. A room on the ground-floor is still pointed out as the domestic chapel; but there are no traces of it ever having been devoted to such use.

"Hugh Oldham, LL.B., Bishop of Exeter, was descended from an ancient family of that name. According to Dodsworth (MSS. folio 152), he was born at Oldham, in a house in Goulbourne-street; but this assertion is contradicted by the testimony of his other biographers: Wood and Godwin state that he was born in Manchester, by which they mean not so much Manchester town as Manchester parish; and Dugdale, in his Lancashire visitation, states more definitely in what part of the parish, correcting at the same time the misstatement of the others, 'not at Oldham, but at Crumpsall, near Manchester.' In 1503 he was created Archdeacon of Exeter, and in the following year was raised, through the influence of the Countess of Richmond, to the see of Exeter. In 1515, having founded the Grammar School of Manchester, he endowed it with the corn-mills situate on the river Irk, which he purchased from Lord de la Warre, as well as with other messuages and lands in Manchester."

In relation to Bishop Oldham, it may be worth notice that in the *Manchester Guardian* of Wednesday, January 10th, 1855, I found the following letter respecting a descendant

of this prelate. This brief notice of an aged and poverty-stricken descendant of the bishop—a soldier's wife, who has followed the fortunes of her husband, as a prisoner of war, and through the disasters of battle, shipwreck, and imprisonment in a foreign land—is not uninteresting:—"There is now living in this city a poor, aged woman, who, it appears, is a descendant of the founder of the Manchester Grammar School, and who was also (in 1783) the first scholar in the first Sunday school opened in Manchester. In subsequent years, as a soldier's wife, she followed the fortunes of her husband in the tented field, as a prisoner of war, and also in shipwreck. She is in full possession of her mental powers; and though, in a certain sense, provided for, I am persuaded that many of those whose *Alma Mater* was the Grammar School, and the Sunday school teachers and scholars, would be delighted to honour her."

Crumpsall, in the chapelry of Blackley, was also the birthplace of Humphrey Chetham, one of Fuller's Worthies, and a man whom Manchester has good reason to hold in remembrance. The following matter relative to the man, and the place of his birth, is from the same volume:—

"He was born at his father's residence, Crumpsall Hall, and was baptised at the Collegiate Church, Manchester, July 15th, 1580. He probably received his education at the Grammar School of his native town. Associated with his brothers, George and Ralph, he embarked in trade as a dealer in fustians, and so prospered in his business that in 1620 he purchased Clayton Hall, near Manchester, which he made his residence, and subsequently, in 1628, Turton Tower. 'He signally improved himself,' writes Fuller, 'in piety and outward prosperity, and was a diligent reader of the scriptures, and of the works of sound divines, and a respecter of such ministers as he accounted truly godly, upright, sober, discreet, and sincere. He was high-sheriff of the county in 1635, and again in 1648, discharging the place with great honour, insomuch that very good gentlemen of birth and estate did wear his cloth at the assize, to testify their unfeigned affection to him; and two of them (John Hartley and Henry Wrigley, Esquires), of the same profession with himself, have since been sheriffs of the county.'

"By his will, dated December 16th, 1651, he bequeathed £7,000 to buy a fee-simple estate of £420 per annum, wherewith to provide for the maintenance, education, and apprenticing

of forty poor boys of Manchester, between the ages of six and fourteen years—children of poor but honest parents—no bastards, nor diseased at the time they are chosen, nor lame, nor blind, 'in regard the town of Manchester hath ample means already (if so employed) for the maintenance of such impotents.' The hospital thus founded was incorporated by Charles II. In 1700 the number of boys was increased to sixty, and from 1779 to 1826 eighty boys were annually maintained, clothed, and educated. In the year 1718 the income of the hospital amounted to £517. 8s. 4d., and in 1826 it had reached to £2,608. 3s. 11d.

"He bequeathed, moreover, the sum of £1,000 to be expended in books, and £100 towards erecting a building for their safe deposit, intending thus to lay the foundation of a public library; and the residue of his estate (amounting to near £2,000) to be devoted to the increase of the said library and the support of a librarian. In 1826 this fund was returned at £542 per annum. The number of volumes is now about 20,000. Mr. Chetham died, unmarried, September 20th, 1653, and was buried at the Collegiate Church, where a monument has recently been erected to his memory, at the cost of a former participator in his bounty."

The following description of the house, at Crumpsall, in which Humphrey Chetham was born, is also given in Booker's "History of Blackley Chapel:"—

"Crumpsall Hall, the residence of this branch of the Chethams, was another specimen of the half-timbered mansions already described. In design, the same arrangement seems to have been followed that is met with in many of the halls erected during the fourteenth and two succeeding centuries—an oblong pile forming the centre, with cross gables at each end, projecting some distance outwards. The framework consisted of a series of vertical timbers, crossed by others placed transversely, with the exception of the gables, in the upper part of which the braces sprang diagonally from the centre or king-post. The roofs were of high pitch, and extended considerably beyond the outer surface of the walls, thus not only allowing of a more rapid drain of water, but also affording a greater protection from the weather. The hall was of two stories, and lighted chiefly by bay-windows, an occasional dormer-window in the upper story rising above the roof, and adding to the effect of the building by destroying that lineal appearance which it would otherwise have

assumed. This mansion, though never possessing any great pretensions to architectural excellence, was, nevertheless, interesting from the picturesque arrangement of its details, and may be considered a very creditable example of the middle-class houses of the period to which it is referred. It occupied a site distant nearly a quarter of a mile from that of the present hall, and was taken down about the year 1825."

Well may Fuller, writing of Humphrey Chetham, say, "God send us more such men!" The "poor boys" of Manchester may well repeat the prayer, and pray also that heaven may send after them men who will look to the righteous administration of the bequests which such men leave behind them.

For the purpose of this sketch, I went down to the Chetham Library, to copy, from Booker's "History of Blackley," the foregoing particulars. The day was gloomy, and the great quadrangle of the college was as still as a churchyard. Going up the old staircase, and treading as lightly as I could with a heavy foot, as I went by the principal librarian's room door, I entered the cloistral gloom of the old library. All was silent, as I went through the dark array of book-laden shelves. The sub-librarian was writing in some official volume, upon the sill of a latticed window, in one of the recesses. Hearing an approaching foot, he came out, and looked the usual quiet inquiry. "'Booker's Blackley,'" said I. He went to one of the recesses, unlocked the door, and brought out the book. "Will you enter it, sir?" said he, pointing to the volume kept for that purpose. I did so, and walked on into the reading room of the library; glancing, as I went in, at Oliver Cromwell's sword, which hangs above the doorway. There was a good fire, and I had that antique apartment all to myself. The old room looked very clean and comfortable, and the hard oaken floor resounded to the footstep. The whole furniture was of the most quaint and substantial character. It was panelled all round with bright old black oak. The windows were latticed, and the window-sills broad. The heavy tables were of solid oak, and the chairs of the same, with leather-covered and padded seats and backs, studded with brass nails. A curiously-carved black oak bookstand stood near the door, and several antique mirrors, and dusky portraits, hung around upon the dark panelling. Among these is the portrait of Bradford the martyr, a native of Manchester. In the library there is a small black-letter volume,

entitled, "Letters of Maister John Bradford, a faythful minister and a syngular pyllar of Christe's Church: by whose great trauiles and diligence in preaching and planting the syncerity of the Gospel, by whose most goodly and innocent lyfe, and by whose long and payneful imprisonments for the maintenance of the truth, the kingdom of God was not a little aduanced: who also at last most valiantly and cheerfully gaue his blood for the same. The 4th day of July. In the year of our Lord 1555." The portrait of Humphrey Chetham, the founder, hangs immediately above the old-fashioned fireplace, under the emblazoned arms of his family. Sitting by the fire, at a little oak table covered with green baize, I copied the particulars here given, relative to Chetham's bequest to the people of his native locality. I could not but lift my eyes now and then towards that solemn face, inwardly moved by a feeling which reverently said, "Will it do?" The countenance of the fine old merchant seemed to wear an expression of sorrow, not unmingled with quiet anger, at the spectacle of twenty thousand books—intended as a "Free Library," though now, in comparison with its possibilities, free chiefly in name—twenty thousand books, packed together in gloomy seclusion, yet surrounded by a weltering crowd of five hundred thousand people, a great number of whom really hunger for the knowledge here, in a great measure, consigned—with excellent registrative care and bibliopolic skill—to dusty oblivion and the worm. It is true that this cunningly-secreted "Free Library" is open six hours out of the twenty-four, but these hours fall precisely within that part of the day in which people who have to work for their bread are cooped up at their occupations. At night, when the casino, the singing-room, and the ale-house, and all the low temptations of a great city are open, and actively competing for their prey, the Chetham Library has been locked up for hours. I am not sure that the noble-hearted founder would be satisfied with it all, if he saw the relations of these things now. It seems all the more likely that he would not be so, when one observes the tone in which, in his will, he alludes to the administration of certain other local charities existing in his own time. After specially naming the class of "poor boys" for whose benefit his hospital was intended, he specially excludes certain others, "*in regard the town of Manchester hath ample means already,* (IF SO EMPLOYED) *for the maintenance of such impotents.*" Judging, from the glimpse we

have in this passage, of his way of thinking upon matters of this kind, it seems likely that, if it were possible to consult him upon the subject, he would consider it a pity that the twenty thousand books in the library, and the five hundred thousand people outside the walls, are not brought into better acquaintance with each other. So, also, murmurs many a thoughtful man, as he walks by the college gates, in his hours of leisure, when the library is closed.

Rostherne Mere.

(A CHESHIRE SKETCH.)

Though much the centuries take, and much bestow,
Most through them all immutable remains—
Beauty, whose world-wide empire never wanes,
Sole permanence 'mid being's ceaseless flow.
These leafy heights their tiny temple owe
To some rude hero of the Saxon thanes,
Whom, slowly pricking from the neighbouring plains,
Rapt into votive mood the scene below.
Much, haply, he discerned, unseen by me—
Angels and demons hovering ever near;
But most he saw and felt, I feel and see—
Linking the "then" and "there" with "now" and "here,"
The grace serene that dwells on grove and lea,
The tranquil charm of little Rostherne Mere.

—F. ESPINASSE.

ROSTHERNE MERE was a pet theme with a young friend of mine, and we started together towards that place, at noon, one Sunday in June. Walking up to the Oxford Road Station, we paid our sixpences, and got our tickets to Bowdon, which is the nearest point to Rostherne Mere, by rail; being four miles from the latter place. The day was fine, and the sky clear, except where gauzy clouds floated across it with dreamy grace; as if they had come out for a holiday. Everything seemed to feel that it was Sunday. The fields and groves were drest in their best. It was the Sabbath of the year with them. In a few minutes our fiery steed had whirled us to Bowdon; and we walked up the wooden steps that lead from the station. Turning to the left at the top, we struck into a quiet road that leads in the direction of Rostherne. Bowdon bells were ringing to church as we walked along, surrounded by singing birds, and sunshine, and sweet odours from cottage-gardens by the wayside. Now and then a young sylph, of graceful face and timid mien, tripped past us, in the garb of a lady,—on her way to church, with her books before her; then a knot of pretty, brown-faced village girls, with

wild flowers in their hands, going the same way, with all the innocent vivacity of childhood in their look and gait; anon came slowly wending up the path an old couple, bending with age,—the history of a simple life of honourable toil written in their faces, and their attire wearing that touching air which always marks the struggle which decent poverty makes to put its best appearance on. The road, which seemed to be little frequented, shortly brought us to Ashley Hall, a picturesque woodland mansion. A fine avenue of ancestral trees shade the walk to the porch of the old hall, which nestles behind the present modern building. The outbuildings are antiquated and extensive. The house still wears the appearance of an abode of comfort and elegance, bent with that quaint charm which hangs about all fine, old-fashioned rural dwellings. Nothing seemed to be stirring in or about the hall, but the wind, the birds, and the trees; and the two large stone sphinxes in front of the porch looked like petrified genii, so profound was the repose of this green nook. Outside the house the grass was growing over everything, even over the road we walked on, it was creeping. For some distance the road-side was pleasantly soft to the foot with springy verdure, and thick-leaved trees overhung the highway,

> That faire did spred
> Their armes abroad, with gray mosse overcaste;
> And their green leaves, trembling with every blast,
> Made a calm shadow far in compasse round,

until we began to descend into the green pastures of a little vale, through which a clear river winds its murmuring way. A widow lady stood in the middle of the path, waiting till her little orphan lad and his sister drove a herd of cows from the field by the water-side. There was the shade of grief on her pale face, and she returned our salutation with pensive courtesy. We loitered a few minutes by the gate, and helped the lad and his sister to gather the cattle, and then went on, thinking of the affecting group we had left behind us. The wild flowers were plentiful and fine by the way, especially that little blue-eyed beauty, the "Forget-me-not," which grew in great profusion about the hedges. A drove of hungry-looking Irish cattle came wearily up the road, driven by a frieze-coated farmer, who rode upon a rough pony, that never knew a groom; and behind him limped a bare-footed drover, eagerly munching a lump of dry loaf, as he urged forward a two-days-old calf by a twist in the tail,—an old application of the screw-propelling principle, which

is very effectual with all kinds of dilatory animals, with tails on. He was the very picture of poverty, and yet there was a gay-hearted archness on his brown face; and he gave us the "good day" merrily. The very flutter of his rags seemed to have imbibed the care-defying gaiety of the curious biped they hung upon,—with such tender attachment. The whole country was one tranquil scene of fertile verdure, frequently flat for the length of a mile or two; but gently-undulated in some places; and picturesquely wooded. In a vista of nearly two miles, not a human foot was on the road, but ours; and every sight and sound that greeted the senses as we sauntered along the blossomy hedge-side, in the hot sunshine, was serenely-sweet and rural. Skirting the wall of Tatton Park, we came to a substantial farmhouse, near the highway, and opening the gate, we walked up to it, to get a few minutes rest, and a drink. At our request, a girl at the door of the house brought us a large jug-full of churn-milk, which, when she had reached us a seat in the garden, we drank as we sat in the sun. In the yard, a little fat-legged urchin had crept, with his "porritch-pot," under the nose of a large chained dog, about twice the size of himself, and sat there, holding his spoon to the dog's mouth, childishly beseeching him to "sup it." The good-natured brute kept a steady eye on us while we were in sight, postponing any notice of his little playmate. By direction of the goodwife, we took a by-path which led towards the village. The country folk were returning from church, and among them a number of little girls, wearing a head-dress of pure white, but of a very awkward shape. What was the meaning, or what the use, of the badge they wore, I could not exactly tell.

We found that, though the village had many pretty cottage homes, dropped down irregularly among the surrounding green, it consisted chiefly of one little street of rural houses, of very pleasant appearance. Here and there, a latticed window was open to the front, showing a small parlour, scrupulously clean and orderly; the furniture old-fashioned, substantial, and carefully polished; and the Bible "gleaming through the lowmost window-pane," under the shade of myrtle-pots, and fuchsias in full flower. As we looked about us for the church, a gentleman in the garb of a clergyman stepped out of one of the houses, which, though a whitewashed dwelling, of simple construction, and of no great size any way, still had something peculiarly

attractive in its retired position, and an air of superiority about the taste and trimness of all its appurtenances. He had a book in one hand, and leaned forward in his walk,—not from infirmity, for he was hale and active,—but as if to give impetus to his progress, which seemed to have an earnest purpose somewhere. This gentleman was the Vicar of Rostherne. We inquired of him the way to the church. "Come up this way," said he, in an agreeable tone, but without stopping in his walk. "Have you never seen it before?" "Never." "Here it is, then," he replied, as we entered the church-field at the top of the knoll. The sudden appearance of the venerable fane, and its picturesque situation, called forth an involuntary expression of admiration from us. We walked on slowly, scanning the features of the solemnly-beautiful scene. The vicar then inquired where we came from, and when we answered "Manchester," he went on, "Well, now, I don't at all wonder, nor much object to you Manchester gentlemen, pent up as you are the whole week, coming out on a Sunday to breathe a little country air, and to look on the woods and fields, but I should be better pleased to see you come in time to attend divine worship, which would be a double benefit to you. You might easily do it, and it would enhance the pleasure of your ramble, for you would go home again doubly satisfied with all that you had seen. Don't you think you would, now?" It needed no Socratic effort on his part to obtain our assent to such a sentiment, so kindly expressed. As we walked on, he brought us dexterously to the north-west corner of the church, the best point of view, looking down through the trees, from the summit of the hill on which the church stands, upon Rostherne Mere in all its beauty. There it lay, in the bosom of the valley below, as smooth and bright as a plate of burnished silver, except towards the middle, where the wind embossed it with fantastic ripples, which shimmered in the sunlight; and it was all fringed round with the rich meadows, and plumy woods,—sloping down to the edge of the water. From the farther side, a finely-wooded country stretched away as far as we could see, till the scene ended in a dim amphitheatre of moorland hills, rising up, from east to west, on the horizon. In front of us, and about four miles beyond the lake, the pretty village of Bowdon and its ancient church were clearly in sight above the woods. It was, altogether, a very beautiful English scene. And it is a pity that this lovely little oasis is not

better known to the jaded hearts that fret themselves to death in Manchester, and rush here and there, in crowds, to fill all the world's telescopes; the majority of them, perhaps, like me, little dreaming of the existence of so sweet a spot so near them. By the side of the mere, where the water was as placid as glass, being sheltered from the wind by the woods on its shelvy banks, we were delighted with a second edition of the scenery on the margin, and of the skies above, clearly reflected in the seemingly unfathomable deeps of the water.

The vicar had left us, and gone into the church, requesting us, when we had feasted our fill on the outside, to follow him, and look through the inside of the church. We lifted the latch, but seeing him addressing a number of young people, who sat round him in attentive attitude, we shut the door quietly, and walking round to the porch on the opposite side, went in, on tiptoe. Standing silent under the organ-loft, we listened, while he impressed upon his young flock the nature and intent of confirmation, and the necessity for their understanding the solemn obligation implied thereby, and devoutly wishing to undertake it, before they could be admitted to partake of it. "And now," said he, "if any of you don't quite understand anything I am saying to you, don't be afraid to say so. I shall be glad to know it, that I may make it clear to you. For you must remember, that it is not what I say to you that will be of use to you, but what you understand of it." He then consulted them about the best times in the following week for them to meet him, that he might assist such as were wishful to prepare for the ceremony. He asked "Thomas," and "Mary," and "Martha," how four o'clock would suit them on certain days, and when they whispered that "half-past seven would suit them better," he replied, "I dare say it will; and let it be so, then." He then repeated the pleasure it would give him to meet them at that or any other hour on certain days next week, to help, and examine them. It was only changing his dinner hour a little. We walked quietly out as he began to catechise them, postponing our examination of the interior till a fitter opportunity.

Rostherne churchyard is a singularly retired spot. A solemn repose mingles with the natural charms of everything about it, increased by the antiquity of its relics. Though near the village, it is approached from it by a gentle ascent, from the head of which it slopes away, clean out of sight of the village, and is

bounded on the west side by a row of sombre old trees, through which Rostherne Hall is seen, in the midst of woods and gardens. No other building except the church is in sight; and a sweeter spot for the life-wearied body to take its last rest in, could hardly be imagined. As I walked about this quiet grave-yard, which is environed by scenery of such a serene kind, that nature itself seems afraid to disturb the repose of the sleepers, upon whose bed the leaves tremble silently down; and where I could hear no sounds but a drowsy rustle of the neighbouring trees,—I thought of Gray's inimitable "Elegy written in a Country Churchyard:"—

Beneath these rugged elms, that yew tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from her straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For then no more the blazing heart shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to the sickle yield;
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team a-field!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour;
The paths of glory lead—but to the grave.

. . . . . .

Yet e'en these bones, from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by the unletter'd muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

This poem—the finest of the kind in the English language—might, with equal fitness, have been written of this peaceful

churchyard of Rostherne village. Man, whom Quarles calls a "worm of five feet long," is so liable to have his thoughts absorbed by the art of keeping himself bodily alive, that he is none the worse for a hint from the literature of the churchyard:—

> Art is long, and life is fleeting,
> And our hearts, though stout and brave,
> Still, like muffled drums, are beating
> Funeral marches to the grave.

We walked over the gravestones, reading the inscriptions, some of which had a strain of simple pathos in them. such as the following:—

> Ye that are young, prepare to die,
> For I was young, and here I lie.

Others there were in this, as in many other burial-places, which were either unmeaning, or altogether unsuitable to the situation they were in. There were several half-sunken head-stones in different parts of the yard, mostly bemossed and dim with age. One or two were still upright; the rest leaned one way or other. These very mementoes, which pious care had set up, to keep alive the memories of those who lay mouldering in the earth below, were sinking into the graves of those they commemorated.

At the outside of the north-east entrance of the church, lies an ancient stone coffin, dug up a few years ago in the graveyard. Upon the lid of the coffin was sculptured the full-length figure of a knight, in a complete suit of mail, with sword and shield. No further clue has been obtained to the history of this antique coffin and its effigy, than that it belonged to one of the Cheshire family of Venables, whose crest and motto ("Sic Donec") it bears. The church contains many interesting monuments, belonging to this and other families of the old gentry of Cheshire. Several of these are of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But the finest and most interesting monuments in the church, as works of art, are those belonging to the Egerton family, of Tatton Park. At a suitable time, the sexton occasionally takes a visitor up to the gate which separates the Egerton seat and monuments from the rest of the church, and, carefully unlocking it, ascends two steps with a softened footfall, and leads him into the storied sanctum of the Lords of Tatton; where, among other costly monuments, he will be struck by the chaste and

expressive beauty of a fine modern one, in memory of a young lady belonging to this family. On a beautiful tomb, of the whitest marble, the figure of a young lady reclines upon a mattress and pillow of the same, in the serenest grace of feature and attitude: and "the rapture of repose" which marks the expression of the countenance, is a touching translation, in pure white statuary, of those beautiful lines in which Byron describes the first hours of death:—

> Before decay's effacing fingers
> Have swept the lines where beauty lingers.

At the back of the recumbent lady, an exquisite figure of an angel kneels, and leans forward with delicate grace, watching over the reposing form, with half-opened wings, and one hand slightly extended over the dead. The effect of the whole is exceedingly beautiful, chaste, and saddening. The monument is kept carefully covered with clean white handkerchiefs, except when the family is present, when it is uncovered, until their departure. Before I was admitted to view this beautiful memorial, I had heard something of the story which it illustrates, and I inquired further of the sexton respecting it. The old man said that the young lady had been unwell only a few days previous to the evening of her death, and on that evening the family physician thought her so much better, and felt so certainly-expectant of a further improvement in her health, that he directed her attendants to get her to repose, and then they might themselves safely retire to rest for a little while. They did so; and returning soon, found her still lying precisely as they had laid her, and looking so placid in feature, that they did not know she was dead, until they came to find her quite cold. The monument represents her as she was thus found. As I stood looking upon this group of statuary, the evening sun shone through the southern windows of the old church, and the sexton—who evidently knew what the effect would be—lowered the crimson blind of the window nearest to the monument. This threw a soft rich crimson hue over the white marble tomb, the figures, and the sculptured drapery, which gave it an inexpressibly-rich appearance. So white and clean was the whole, that the white handkerchiefs which the sexton had taken off the figures, and laid upon the white basement of the tomb, looked like part of the sculpture.

The church is dedicated to St. Mary. It is proved to have existed long prior to 1188. The present steeple was erected in

1741. There is something venerable about the appearance of an old ecclesiastical building, which continually and eloquently preaches, without offending. Apart from all questions of doctrines, formulas, and governments, I often feel a veneration for an old church, akin to that expressed by him who said that he never passed one without feeling disposed to take off his hat to it.

The sun was setting westward over the woods, and we began to think of getting a quiet meal somewhere before we went back. There is generally an old inn not far from an old church. "How it comes, let doctors tell;" but it is so; and we begun to speculate upon the chance of finding one in this case. Going out of the churchyard at the lowest corner, through a quaint wicket gate, with a shed over it, a flight of steps led us down into a green dingle, embosomed in tall trees, and there, in front of us, stood a promising country "hostelrie," under the screen of the woods. We looked an instant at its bright window, and its homely and pleasant appurtenances, and then, with assured minds, darted in, to make a lunge at the larder. "A well-conducted inn is a thing not to be recklessly sneered at in this world of ours, after all," thought I. We sat down in a shady little room in front, and desired the landlord to get us some tea, with any substantial stomach-gear that was handy and plentiful. In a few minutes a snowy cloth was on the table, followed by "neat-handed Phillis," with the tea things. A profusion of strong tea, and toast, and fine cream, came next, in beautiful china and glass ware; the whole crowned with a huge dish of ham and poached eggs, of such amplitude, that I began to wonder who was to join us. Without waste of speech, we fell to, with all the appetite and enjoyment of Sancho at Camacho's wedding. The landlord kept popping in, to see that we wanted nothing, and to urge us to the attack; which was really a most needless though a generous office. After tea, we strolled another hour by the edge of the water, then took the road home, just as the sun was setting. The country was so pleasant, and we so refreshed, that we resolved to walk to Manchester, and watch the sinking of the summer twilight among the woods and fields by the way. Our route led by the edge of Dunham Park, and through Bowdon, where we took a peep at the church, and the expansive view from the churchyard. There is a fine old yew tree in Bowdon churchyard, seated around. The road from Bowdon to Manchester passes through a country which may be truly characterised

as the market-garden of Manchester. We went on, through the villages of Altrincham, Sale Moor, and Stretford, thinking of his words who said,—

> One impulse from a vernal wood
> Will teach thee more of man,
> Of moral evil, and of good,
> Than all the sages can.

It was midnight when I got to bed, and sank into a sound sleep, to wake in the morning among quite other scenes. But while I live, I shall not easily forget "the tranquil charm of little Rostherne Mere."

Oliver Fernleaf's Watch.

Oh thou who dost these pointers see,
That show the passing hour;
Say,—do I tell the time to thee,
And tell thee nothing more?
I bid thee mark life's little day
With strokes of duty done;
A clock may stop at any time—
But time will travel on.
—The Church Clock.

WHEN I was first bound apprentice, I was so thick-set, and of such short stature for my age, that I began to be afraid that I was doomed to be a pigmy in size; and it grieved my heart to think of it. I remember how anxiously I used to compare my own stunted figure with the height of other lads younger than me; and seeing myself left so much below them, I remember how much I longed for a rise in the world. This feeling troubled me sorely for two or three years. It troubled me so much, indeed, that, even at church, when I heard the words, "Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature?" the question touched me with the pain of a personal allusion to my own defect; and, in those days, I have many a time walked away from service on a Sunday, sighing within myself, and wondering how much a cubit was. But I had a great deal of strong life in my little body; and, as I grew older, I took very heartily to out-door exercises, and I carefully notched the progress of my growth, with a pocket-knife, against a wooden partition, in the office where I was an apprentice. As time went on, my heart became gradually relieved and gay as I saw these notches rise steadily, one over the other, out of the low estate which had given me so much pain. But, as this childish trouble died away from my mind, other ambitions awoke within me, and I began to fret at the tether of my apprenticeship, and wish for the time when I

should be five feet eight, and free. Burns's songs were always a delight to me; but there was one of them which I thought more of then than I do now. It was,—

> Oh for ane-an'-twenty, Tam!
> An', hey for ane-an'-twenty, Tam!
> I'd learn my kin a rattlin' sang,
> An' I saw ane-an'-twenty, Tam!

About two years before the wished-for day of my release came, I mounted a long-tailed coat, and a chimney-pot hat, and began to reckon myself among the sons of men. My whiskers, too—they never came to anything grand—never will—but my whiskers began to show a light-coloured down, that pleased the young manikin very much. I was anxious to coax that silken fluz lower down upon my smooth cheeks; but it was no use. They never grew strong; and they would not come low down; so I gave them up at last, with many a sigh. The dainty ariels were timid, and did their sprouting gently. This was one of my first lessons in resignation. I remember, too, it was about the same time that I bought my first watch. It was a second-hand silver verge watch, with large old-fashioned numerals upon the face; and it cost twenty-one shillings. I had a good deal ado to raise the price of it by small savings, by working over-hours, and by the sale of an old accordian, and a sword-stick. Long before I could purchase it, I had looked at it from time to time as I passed by the watchmaker's window; which was on the way between my home and the shop where I was an apprentice. At last I bore the prize away. A few pence bought a steel chain; and my eldest sister gave me an old seal, and a lucky sixpence, to wear upon the chain,—and I felt for the time as if it was getting twelve o'clock with my fortunes. A long-tailed coat; a chimney-pot hat; a watch; a mild promise of whiskers; a good constitution; and a fair chance of being five feet eight, or so. No wonder that I began to push out my shins as I went about the streets. For some weeks after I became possessed of my watch, I took great pleasure in polishing the case, looking into the works, winding it up, and setting it right by public clocks, and by other people's watches. I had a trick, too, of pulling it out in public places, which commanded the range of some desired observation. But after a year or so the novelty wore off, and I began to take less interest in the thing. Besides, through carelessness and inexperienced handling, I found that

my watch began to swallow up a great deal of pocket-money, in new glasses, and other repairs. I was fond of jumping, too, and other rough exercises; and through this my watch got sadly knocked about, and was a continual source of anxiety to me. At last I got rid of it altogether. It had never gone well with me; but it went from me—for good; and I was cured of the watch mania for a long while. In fact, nearly twenty years passed away, during which I never owned a watch; never, indeed, very much felt the want of one. When I look back at those years, and remember how I managed to mark the time without watch of my own, I find something instructive in the retrospect. In a large town there are so many public clocks, and bells, and so many varied movements of public life which are governed by the progress of the hours, that there is little difficulty in the matter. But in the country—in my lonely rambles—I learned, then, to read the march of time, "indifferently well," in the indications of nature, as ploughmen and shepherds do. The sights, and "shapes, and sounds, and shifting elements," became my time-markers; and the whole world was my clock. I can see many compensations arising from the lack of a watch with me during that time.

And now, after so many years of sweet independence in this respect, I find myself, unexpectedly, the owner of a watch once more. I became possessed of it rather curiously, too. The way of it was this. I was on a visit to a neighbouring town; and, in the afternoon, I called to pass an hour with an old friend, before returning home. After the usual hearty salutes, we sat down in a snug back parlour, lighted our pipes, and settled into a dreamy state of repose, which was more delightful than any strained effort at entertainment. We puffed away silently for a while; and then we asked one another questions, in a drowsy way, like men talking in their sleep; then we smoked on again, and looked vacantly round about the room, and into the fire. At last, I noticed that my friend began to gaze earnestly at my clothing; and, knowing him to be a close observer, and a man of penetrative spirit, I felt it; though I knew very well that it was all right, for he takes a kindly interest in all I wear, or do, or say. Well; he began to look hard at my clothing, beginning with my boots. I didn't care much about him examining my boots; for, as it happened, they had just been soled, and heeled, and welted afresh; with a bran new patch upon one

side. If he had seen them a week before, I should have been pained, for they were in a ruinous state then; and, being rather a dandified pair originally, they looked abominable. I think there is nothing in the world so intensely wretched in outward appearance as shabby dandyism. Well; he began with my boots; and, after he had scrutinised them thoroughly for a minute or two, I felt, instinctively, that he was going to peruse the whole of my garments from head to foot, like a tapestried story. And so it was. When he had finished my boots, his eyes began to travel slowly up my leg; and, as they did so, my mind ran anxiously ahead, to see what the state of things was upon the road that his glance was coming. "How are my trousers?" thought I. There was no time to lose; for I felt his eye coming up my leg, like a dissecting knife. At last, I bethought me that I had split my trousers across one knee, about a fortnight before; and the split had only been indifferently stitched up. "Now for it," thought I, giving myself a sudden twitch, with the intention of throwing my other leg over that knee to hide the split. But I was too late. His eye had already fastened upon the place like a leech. I saw his keen glance playing slyly about the split, and my nerves quivered in throes of silent pain all the while. At last, he lifted up his eyes, and sighed, and then, looking up at the ceiling, he sighed out the word, "Aye," very slowly; and then he turned aside to light his pipe at the fire again; and, whilst he was lighting his pipe, I very quietly laid the sound leg of my trousers over the split knee. Pushing the tobacco into his pipe with the haft of an old penknife, he now asked me how things were going on in town. I pretended to be quite at ease; and I tried to answer him with the air of one who was above the necessity of such considerations. But I knew that he had only asked the question for the purpose of throwing me off my guard; and I felt sure that his eyes would return to the spot where they had left off at. And they did so. But he saw at once that the knee was gone; so he travelled slowly upwards, with persistent gaze. In two or three minutes he stopped again; it was somewhere about the third button of my waistcoat—or rather the third button-hole, for the button was off. He halted there; and his glance seemed to snuff round about the place, like a dog that thinks it has caught the scent; and I began to feel uncomfortable again; for, independent of the button being off, I had only twopence-halfpenny, and a bit of

blacklead pencil, and an unpaid bill in my pocket; and somehow I thought he was finding it all out. So I shifted a little round, and began to hum within myself,—

Take, oh take those eyes away!

But it was no use. He would do it. And I couldn't stand it any longer; so I determined to bolt before he got up to my shirt front, or "dickey,"—for I had a "dickey" on, and one side of it was bulging out in a disorderly way, and I durst not try to put it right for fear of drawing his attention to it. I determined to be rid of the infliction at once, so I pretended to be in a hurry. Knocking the ashes out of my pipe, I rose up and said, "Have you got a time-table?"

"Yes."

"There's a train about now, I think."

"Yes; but stop till the next. What's your hurry? You're not here every day. Sit down and get another pipe."

"How's your clock?" said I, turning round and looking through the window, so as to get a sly chance of pushing my "dickey" into its place. "How's your clock?"

"Well, it's about ten minutes fast. Isn't it, Sarah?" said he to the servant, who was coming in with some coals.

"No," replied she. "I put it right by th' blacksmith, this mornin'."

By "the blacksmith," she meant the figure of an old man with a hammer, which struck the hours upon the bell of a public clock, a little higher up the street.

"Well," said my friend, looking at the time-table, "in any case, you're too late for this train now. Sit down a bit. I left my watch this morning, to have a new spring put in it; but I'll keep my eye on the clock, so that you shall be in time for the next. Sit you down, an' let's have a chat about old times."

I gave a furtive glance at my "dickey," and seeing it was all right, I sat down again with a sigh, laying the sound leg of my trousers carefully over my split knee. I had no sooner sat down, than he looked at my waistcoat pocket again, and said, "I say, old boy, why don't you carry a watch? It would be a great convenience."

I explained to him that I had been so many years used to notice public clocks, and to marking the time by the action of nature, and by those movements of human life that are regulated

by clock-work, that I felt very little need for a watch. Besides, it was as easy to ask the time of day of people who had watches, as it would be to look at one's own; and then, if I had a watch, I did not know whether the convenience of the thing would compensate for the anxiety and expense of it. He listened attentively, and then, after looking into the fire musingly for a minute or two, as if he was interpreting my excuse in some way of his own, he suddenly knocked his pipe upon the top bar of the fire-grate, and said, "By Jupiter Ammon, I'll give you one!" My friend never swears, except by that dissolute old Greek; or by a still more mysterious deity, whom he calls "the Living Jingo!" Whenever he mentions either of these, I know that he means something strong; so I sat still and "watched the case," as lawyers say.

"Mary," said he, rising, and calling to his wife, who was in another room; "Mary, wheer's that old watch?"

"I have it upstairs, in an old rosewood writing-desk," replied she.

"Just fetch it down; I want to look at it." He listened at the door, until he heard her footsteps going upstairs; and then he turned to me, chuckling and rubbing his hands; and, slapping me on the shoulder, he said, "Now then, old fellow, fill your pipe again! By the Living Jingo, you shall have the time o' day in your pocket before you leave this house." She was a good while in returning; so he shouted up the stairs, "Haven't you found it yet, Mary?"

"Yes," replied she, "it's here. I'll be down in a minute."

I began to puff very hard at my pipe; for I was getting excited. She came at last, and said, as she laid the watch in his hand, "I have thought of selling it many a time, for it is of no use lying yonder."

"Aye," replied my friend, pretending to look very hard at the works. As long as she remained in the room, he still kept quietly saying, "Aye, aye," at short intervals. But when she left the room, he earnestly watched the closing door, and then, shutting the watch, he came across to me, and, laying it in my hand, he said, "There, old boy, that's yours. Keep it out of sight till you get out of the house." And I did keep it out of sight. But I was more than ever anxious to get away by the next train, so that I could fondle it freely. It was an old silver lever watch, without fingers. It was silent, with a silence that

had continued long; its face was dusty; and the case wore the cloudy hue of neglect. However, I bore my prize away at last; and, before the day was over, I had spent eighteenpence upon new fingers, and sixpence upon a yard-and-a-half of broad black watered silk ribbon for a guard. Next day, after I had polished the case thoroughly with whitening, I put on a clean shepherd's plaid waistcoat, in order to show the broad black ribbon which led to my watch. Since then, I know not how oft I have stopped to put it right by the cathedral clock; and I have found sometimes, as the Irishman did, that "the little divul had bate that big fellow by two hours in twelve." It is a curious thing, this old watch of mine; and I like it: there is something so human about it. It is full of

Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles.

Sometimes the fingers stand still, even when the works are going on. Even when wound up, it has a strange trick of stopping altogether for an hour or two now and then, as if smitten with a fit of idleness; and then it will set off again of its own accord, like a living thing wakening up from sleep. It stops oftener than it goes. It is not so much a time-keeper as a standing joke; and looking at it from this point of view, I am very fond of this watch of mine. Before I had it, whenever I chanced to waken in the night time, I used to strike a light, and read myself to sleep again. But now, when I waken in the night, I suddenly remember, "Oh, my watch!" Then I listen, and say to myself, "I believe it has stopped again!" and then, listening more attentively, and hearing its little pulse beating, I say, "No: there it goes. Bravo!" And I strike a light, and caress the little thing; and wind it up. I have great fun with it, in a quiet way. I believe, somehow, that it is getting used to me; and I shouldn't like to part with it any more. There is a kind of friendship growing between us that will last until my own pulse is stopped by the finger of death. And what is death, after all, but the stopping of life's watch; to be wound up again by the Maker? I should not like to lose this old watch of mine now. It is company when I am lonely; it is diversion when I am tired; and, though it is erratic, it is amiable and undemonstrative. I will make it famous yet, in sermon or in song. I have begun once or twice, "Oh thou! ——" and then stopped, and tried, "When I behold ——" and then I have stopped

again. But I will do it yet. If the little thing had a soul, now, I fear that it would never be saved; for, "faith without works is vain." But I have faith in it, though it has deceived me oft. My quaint old monitor! How often has it warned me, that when man goes "on tick," it always ends in a kind of "Tic douloureux." But the hour approaches, when its tiny pulse and mine must both stand still; for—

> Owd Time,—he's a troublesome codger,—
> Keeps nudgin' us on to decay;
> An' whispers, you're nobbut a lodger;
> Get ready for goin' away.

And when "life's fitful fever" is past, I hope they will not sell my body to the doctors; nor my watch to anybody; but bury us together; and let us rest when they have done so.

Norbreck:

A SKETCH ON THE LANCASHIRE COAST.

CHAPTER I.

Come unto these yellow sands,
Then take hands:
Court'sied when you have, and kissed,
The wild waves whist.
—THE TEMPEST.

AT the western edge of that quiet tract of Lancashire, called "The Fylde," lying between Wyre, Ribble, and the Irish Channel, the little wind-swept hamlet of Norbreck stands, half asleep, on the brow of a green ridge overlooking the sea. The windows of a whitewashed cottage wink over their garden wall, as the traveller comes up the slope, between tall hedgerows; and very likely he will find all so still, that, but for wild birds that crowd the air with music, he could hear his footsteps ring on the road as clearly as if he were walking on the flags of a gentleman's greenhouse. In summer, when its buildings are glittering in their annual suit of new whitewash, and when all the country round looks green and glad, it is a pleasant spot to set eyes upon—this quiet hamlet overlooking the sea. At that time of year it smells of roses, and of "cribs where oxen lie;" and the little place is so steeped in murmurs of the ocean, that its natural dreaminess seems deepened thereby. I cannot find that any great barons of the old time, or that any world-shaking people have lived there; or that any events which startle a nation have ever happened on that ground; but the tranquil charm that fills the air repays for the absence of historic fame.

There is seldom much stir in Norbreck, except such as the elements make. The inhabitants would think the place busy

with a dozen people upon its grass-grown road at once, whatever the season might be. It is true that on a fine day in summer I have now and then seen a little life just at the entrance of the hamlet. There, stands a pretty cottage, of one story, consisting of six cosy rooms, that run lengthwise; its white walls adorned with rose trees and fruit trees, and its windows bordered with green trellis work. Two trim grass-plots, with narrow beds of flowers, and neat walks, mosaically-paved with blue and white pebbles from the sea, fill up the front garden, which a low white wall and a little green gate enclose from the road. In front of this cottage, I have sometimes seen a troop of rosy children playing round a pale girl, who was hopelessly infirm, and, perhaps on that account, the darling of the whole household. I have seen her rocking in the sun, and, with patient melancholy, watching their gambols, whilst they strove to please her with all kinds of little artless attentions. Poor Lucy! Sometimes, after swaying to and fro thoughtfully in her chair, she would stop and ask questions that sent her father out of the room to wipe his eyes. "Papa, are people lame in heaven?" "Papa, are angels poorly sometimes, like we are here?" . . . It is one of those beautiful compensations that mingle with the mishaps of life, that such a calamity has often the sweet effect of keeping kind hearts continually kind. The poor Lancashire widow, when asked why she seemed to fret more for the loss of her helpless lad than for any of her other children, said she couldn't tell, except "it were becose hoo'd had to nurse him moor nor o' tother put together." Surely, "there is a soul of good in all things evil." About this pretty cottage, where little Lucy lived, is the busiest part of the hamlet in summer time. There may chance to be two or three visitors sauntering in the sunshine; or, perhaps, old Thomas Smith, better known as "Owd England," the sea-beaten patriarch of Norbreck, may paddle across the road to look after his cattle, or, staff in hand, may be going down to "low water" a-shrimping, with his thin hair playing in the breeze. Perhaps Lizzy, the milkmaid, may run from the house to the shippon, with her skirt tucked up, and the neb of an old bonnet pulled down to shade her eyes; or Tom, the cow lad, may be leaning against a sunny wall, whistling, and mending his whip, and wondering how long it wants to dinner-time. There may be a fine cat dozing on the garden wall, or gliding stealthily towards the outhouses These

are the common features of life there. For the rest, the sounds heard are mostly the cackle of poultry, the clatter of milk cans, the occasional bark of a dog, the distant lowing of kine, a snatch of country song floating from the fields, the wild birds' "tipsy routs of lyric joy," and that all-embracing murmur of the surge which fills one's ears wherever we go. In Norbreck everything smacks of the sea. On the grassy border of the road, about the middle of the hamlet, there is generally a pile of wreck waiting the periodical sale which takes place all along the coast. I have sometimes looked at this pile, and thought that perhaps to this or that spar some seaman might have clung with desperate energy among the hungry waters, until he sank, overpowered, into his uncrowded grave. The walls of gardens and farmyards are mostly built of cobles from the beach, sometimes fantastically laid in patterns of different hues. The garden beds are edged with shells, and the walks laid with blue and white pebbles. Here and there are rockeries of curiously-shaped stones from the shore. Every house has its little store of marine rarities, which meet the eye on cornices and shelves wherever we turn. Now and then we meet with a dead sea-mew on the road, and noisy flocks of gulls make fitful excursions landward; particularly in ploughing time, when they crowd after the plough to pick slugs and worms out of the new furrows.

With a single exception, all the half-dozen dwellings in Norbreck are on one side of the road, with their backs to the north. On the other side there are gardens, and a few whitewashed outhouses, with weatherbeaten walls. The main body of the hamlet consists of a great irregular range of buildings, formerly the residence of a wealthy family. This pile is now divided into several dwellings, in some of which are snug retreats for such as prefer the seclusion of this sea-nest to the bustle of a crowded watering place. A little enclosed lawn, belonging to the endmost of the group, and then a broad field, divides this main cluster from the only other habitation. The latter seems to stand off a little, as if it had more pretensions to gentility than the rest. It is a picturesque house, of different heights, built at different times. At the landward end, a spacious yard, with great wooden doors close to the road, contains the outbuildings, with an old-fashioned weather-vane on the top of them. The lowmost part of the dwelling is a combination of neat cottages of one story; the highest part is a substantial brick edifice of two stories, with

attics. This portion has great bow windows, which sweep the sea view, from the coast of Wales, round by the Isle of Man, to the mountains of Cumberland. In summer, the white walls of the cottage part are covered with roses and creeping plants, and there is an air of order and tasteful rusticity about the whole; even to the neat coble pavement which borders the wayside. On the top of the porch a stately peacock sometimes struts, like a feathered showman, whilst his mate paces to and fro, cackling on the field wall immediately opposite. There are probably a few poultry pecking about the front; and, if it happens to be a sunny day, a fine old English bear-hound, of the Lyme breed, called "Lion," and not much unlike his namesake in the main, may be seen stretched in a sphinx-like posture on the middle of the road, as if the whole Fylde belonged to him, by right of entail; and slowly moving his head with majestic gaze, as if turning over in his mind whether or not it would be polite to take a piece out of the passing traveller for presuming to walk that way. Perhaps in the southward fields a few kine are grazing and whisking their tails in the sunshine, or galloping from gap to gap under the influence of the gad-fly's spur; and it may happen that some wanderer from Blackpool can be seen on the cliffs, with his garments flapping in the breeze. Except these, and the rolling surge below, all is still at this end of the hamlet, unless the jovial face of the owner appear above the wall that encloses his outbuildings, wishing the passer-by "the fortune of the day." Norbreck, as a whole, is no way painfully genteel in appearance, but it is sweet and serene, and its cluster of houses seems to know how to be comfortable, without caring much for display. Dirt and destitution are unknown there; in fact, I was told that this applies generally to all the scattered population of that quiet Fylde country. Though there are many people there whose means of existence are almost as simple as those of the wild bird and the field mouse, yet squalor and starvation are strangers amongst them. If any mischance happen to any of these Fylde folk, everybody knows everybody else, and, somehow, they stick to one another, like Paddy's shrimps,—if you take up one you take up twenty. The road, which comes up thither from many a mile of playful meanderings through the green country, as soon as it quits the last house, immediately dives through the cliffs, with a sudden impulse, as if it had been reading "Robinson Crusoe," and had been drawn all that long way solely by its love

for the ocean. The sea beach at this spot is a fine sight at any time; but in a clear sunset the scene is too grand to be touched by any imperfect words. Somebody has very well called this part of the coast "the region of glorious sunsets." When the waters retire, they leave a noble solitude, where a man may wander a mile or two north or south upon a floor of sand finer than any marble, "and yet no footing seen," except his own; and hear no sounds that mingle with the mysterious murmurs of the sea but the cry of the sailing gull, the piping of a flock of silver-winged tern, or the scream of the wild sea-mew. Even in summer there are but few stragglers to disturb those endless forms of beauty which the moody waves, at every ebb, leave printed all over that grand expanse, in patterns ever new.

Such is little Norbreck, as I have seen it in the glory of the year. In winter, when the year's whitewash upon its houses is getting a little weather-worn, it looks rather moulty and ragged to the eye; and it is more lonely and wild, simply because nature itself is so then; and Norbreck and nature are not very distant relations.

CHAPTER II.

The wave shall flow o'er this lilye lea,
And Penny Stone fearfu' flee:
The Red Bank scar scud away dismay'd,
When Englond's in jeopardie.
—PENNY STONE: A TRADITION OF THE FYLDE.

IT was a bonny day on the 5th of March, 1860, when I visited Norbreck, just before those tides came on which had been announced as higher than any for a century previous. This announcement brought thousands of people from the interior into Blackpool and other places on that coast. Many came expecting the streets to be invaded by the tide, and a great part of the level Fylde laid under water; with boats plying above the deluged fields, to rescue its inhabitants from the towers of churches and the tops of farmhouses. Knowing as little of these things as inland people generally do, I had something of the same expectation; but when I came to the coast, and found the people going quietly about their usual business, I thought that, somehow, I must be wrong. It is true that one or two farmers had

raised their stacks several feet, and another had sent his "deeds" to Preston, that they might be high and dry till the waters left his land again; and certain old ladies, who had been reading the newspapers, were a little troubled thereby; but, in the main, these seaside folk didn't seem afraid of the tide.

During the two days when the sea was to reach its height, Blackpool was as gay, and the weather almost as fine, as if it had been the month of June, instead of "March—mony weathers," as Fylde folk call it. The promenade was lively with curious inlanders, who had left their "looms" at this unusual season, to see the wonders of the great deep. But when it came to pass that, because there was no wind to help in the water, the tide rose but little higher than common, many people murmured thereat, and the town emptied as quickly as it had filled. Not finding a deluge, they hastened landward again, with a painful impression that the whole thing was a hoax. The sky was blue, the wind was still, and the sun was shining clearly; but this was not what they had come forth to see.

Though some were glad of any excuse for wandering again by the shores of the many-sounding ocean, and bathing soul and body in its renovating charms, the majority were sorely disappointed. Among these, I met one old gentleman, close on seventy, who declared, in a burst of impassioned vernacular, that he wouldn't come to Blackpool again "for th' next fifty year, sink or swim." He said, "Their great tide were nowt i'th world but an arran' sell, getten up by lodgin'-heawse keepers, an' railway chaps, an' newspapper folk, an sich like wastril devils, a-purpose to bring country folk to th' wayter-side, an' hook brass eawt o' their pockets. It were a lond tide at Blackpool folk were after;—an they wanted to get it up i' winter as weel as summer. He could see through it weel enough. But they'd done their do wi' him. He'd too mich white in his e'en to be humbugged twice o'er i'th' same gate, or else he'd worn his yed a greyt while to vast little end. But he'd come no moor a seein' their tides, nor nowt else,—nawe, not if the whole hole were borne't away,—folk an' o,' bigod! He did not blame th' say so mich,—not he. Th' say would behave itsel' reet enough, iv a rook o' thievin' devils would nobbut let it alone, an' not go an' belie it shamefully, just for th' sheer lucre o' ill-getten gain, an' nowt else. . . . He coom fro' Bowton, an' he're beawn back to Bowton by th' next train; an' iv onybody ever see'd him

i' Blackpool again, they met tell him on't at th' time, an' he'd ston a bottle o' wine for 'em, as who they were. They had a little saup o' wayter aside o' whoam that onsert their bits o' jobs i' Bowton reet enough. It're nobbut a mak ov a bruck; but he'd be content wi' it for th' futur—tide or no tide. They met tak their say, an' sup it, for him,—trashy devils!" Of course, this was an extreme case, but there were many grumblers on the same ground; and some amusement arising out of their unreasoning disappointment.

Down at Norbreck, about four miles north of Blackpool, though there was a little talk, here and there, about the curious throng at the neighbouring watering-place, all else was still as usual. "Owd England," the quaint farmer and fisherman of the hamlet, knew these things well. He had lived nearly seventy-four years on that part of the coast, and he still loved the great waters with the fervour of a sea-smitten lad. From childhood he had been acquainted with the moods and tenses of the ocean; and it was a rare day that didn't see him hobble to "low water" for some purpose or other. He explained to me that a tide of much lower register in the tables, if brought in by a strong wind, would be higher in fact than this one with an opposite wind; and he laughed at the fears of such as didn't know much about the matter. "Thoose that are fleyed," said he, "had better go to bed i' boats, an' then they'll ston a chance o' wakenin' aboon watter i'th' mornin'. . . . Th' idea of a whol teawn o' folk comin' to't seea for this. Pshaw! I've no patience wi' 'em! . . . Tide! There'll be no tide worth speykin' on,—silly divuls,—what I knaw. I've sin a fifteen-fuut tide come far higher nor this twenty-one foot eleven can come wi' th' wind again it,—sewer aw hev. So fittin it should, too. . . . But some folk knawn nowt o'th' natur o' things." Lame old Billy Singleton, a weather-worn fisherman, better known by the name of "Peg Leg," sat knitting under the window, with his dim eyes bent over a broken net. "Owd England" turned to him and said, "It wur a fifteen-fuut tide, Billy, at did o' that damage at Cleveless, where th' bevelmen are at wark." Old "Peg Leg" lifted his head, and replied, "Sewer it wor, Thomas; an', by the hectum, that wor a tide! If we'd hed a strang sou'-west wind, this wad ha' played rickin' too. I've heeard as there wor once a village, ca'd Singleton Thorpe, between Cleveless and Rossall. weshed away by a heigh

tide, abaat three hundred year sin'. By the hectum, if that had happen't i' these days, Thomas, here wod ha' bin some cheeop trips an' things stirrin' ower it." He then went on mending his net.

Old bed-ridden Alice, who had spent most of the daylight of seven years stretched upon a couch under the window, said, "But it never could touch us at Norbreck,—nowt o't sooart. It's nearly th' heighest point i't country; isn't it, uncle?" "Sartiny," said "Owd England;" "but," continued he, "iv ye want to see summat worth rememberin', ye mun go to low watter. It'll be a rare seet. Th' seea 'll ebb far nor ever wor knawn i'th' memory o' mon; an' here'll be skeers an' rocks eawt at hesn't bin sin of a hundred year. Iv ye'd like to set fuut o' greawnd at nobody livin' mun walk on again, go daan with us at five o'clock o' Friday afternoon." I felt that this would indeed be an interesting sight, and I agreed to accompany the old fisherman to low water.

It was a cloudless, summer-like evening, when our little company of four set out from Norbreck. As we descended the cliffs, the track of the declining sun's beams upon the sea was too glorious for eyes to endure; and every little pool and rill upon the sands gleamed like liquid gold. A general hush pervaded the scene, and we could hear nothing but our own voices, and a subdued murmur of the distant waves, which made the prevailing silence more evident to the senses. "Owd England" led the way, with his favourite stick in hand, and a basket on his arm for the collection of a kind of salt water snail, called "whilks," which, he said, were "the finest heytin' of ony sort o' fish i'th world for folk i' consumptions." "Ye happen wouldn't think it," said he, "bod I wor i' danger o' consumption when I were a young mon." As we went on, now over a firm swelling sand-bank, now stepping from stone to stone through a ragged "skeer," and slipping into pools and channels left by the tide; or wading the water in reckless glee,—the fine old man kept steadily ahead, muttering his wayward fancies as he made towards the silver fringe that played upon the skirts of the sea. Now and then he stopped to point out the rocks, and tell their names. "That's th' Carlin' an' Cowt,—a common seet enough. Ye see, it's not far eawt. . . . Yon's 'Th' Mussel Rock,' deawn to so'thard. Ther's folk musselin' on it neaw, I believe. But we'll go that way on. . . . Tak raand bith sond-bank

theer. Yaar noan shod for wadin'; an' this skeer's a varra rough un. . . . That's 'Penny Stone,' reight afore you, toward th' seea. Ye'll hev heeard o' 'Th' Penny Stone Rock,' mony a time, aw warnd. There wor once a public-heawse where it stons, i'th owd time; an' they sowd ale there at a penny a pot. Bod then one connot tell whether it wor dear or cheeop till they knaw what size th' pot wor—an' that I dunnot knaw. Mr. Thornber, o' Blackpool, hes written a book abaat this 'Penny Stone;' an' I believe at Mr. Wood, o' Bispham Schoo', hes one. He'll land it yo in a minute, aw warnd. Ye mun send little Tom wi' a bit ov a note. I never see 'Penny Stone' eawt so as to get raand it afore. . . . Neaw, yon far'ast, near low watter, is 'Th' Owd Woman's Heyd.' I've oft heeard on it, an' sometimes sin a bit o't tip aboon watter, bod I never see it dry i' my life afore,—an' I never mun again,—never." He then paddled on, filling his basket, and muttering to himself about this extraordinary ebb, and about the shortness of human life. The sun began to "steep his glowing axle in the western wave," and the scene was melting every moment into a new tone of grandeur. As we neared the water, the skeers were more rugged and wet, and, in a few minutes, we picked up a basketful of "whilks," and a beautiful variety of the sea anemone. After the sun had dipped, his lingering glory still crowded the western heavens, and seemed to deepen in splendour as it died upon the scene; while the golden ripples of the sea sang daylight down to rest. I never saw mild evening close over the world with such dreamy magnificence. We wandered by the water, till

> Golden Hesperus
> Was mounted high in top of heaven sheen,
> And warned his other brethren joyeous
> To light their blessed lamps in Jove's eternall house.

The tide was returning, and the air getting cold; so we went homewards, with wandering steps, in the wake of our old fisherman, by way of "Penny Stone Rock." There is a tradition all over the Fylde that this rock, now only visible "on the utmost verge of the retired wave," marks the locality of a once famous hostelry. Doubtless the tradition has some foundation in fact, as the encroachments of the sea upon this coast have been great, and sometimes disastrous, as in the destruction of the village of Singleton Thorpe, about a mile and a half to northward, in 1555. In the Rev. W. Thornber's interesting little volume, called "Penny Stone; or a Tradition of the Spanish Armada,"

he says of the old hostelry associated with this now submerged rock, "It was situated in a vale, protected from the sea by a barrier of sand-hills, at a short distance from a village called Singleton Thorpe, in the foreland of the Fylde, Lancashire. The site of the homestead was romantic, for it was in the very centre of a Druidical circle, described in a former tradition of the country, one of the huge stones of which reared its misshapen block near the porch. Into this stone a ring had been inserted by the thrifty Jock, its host, to which he was wont to attach the horses of his customers whilst they regaled themselves with a penny pot of his far-famed ale. Hither the whole country resorted on holidays, to spend them in athletic games, and to quaff the beloved beverage; nay, so renowned was the hostel, that 'merrie days of hie away to Penny Stone' was common even to a proverb. Here lay the secret enchantment of its popularity. The old distich tell us that

> Hops, reformation, bays, and beer,
> Came into England all in a year.

Ale was a beverage which had been well known in England, but in the reign of Henry VIII. it assumed a new name from the infusion of hops. Now, Jock's father, a cunning lout, was the first to commence in the Fylde this new, and at that time mysterious system of brewing, which so pleased the palate of his customers, that, while others sold their insipid malt liquor at twopence per gallon, he vended his ale at a penny per pot. Hence his hostel became known by the name of Penny Stone."

Such is the embodiment Mr. Thornber has given to the common tradition of "Penny Stone," which we were now approaching on our homeward way. As we drew near it, we saw five persons come over the shining sands towards the same spot; and we heard merry voices ringing in the air. I first made out my friend Hallstone, in his strong shooting-dress of light-coloured tweed, and attended by two favourite terriers, "Wasp" and "Snap." We met at the rock, and I found my friend accompanied by three "brethren of the mystic tie," one of whom was Mr. Thornber, the veritable chronicler of "Penny Stone." The latter had wandered thus far, with his companions, mainly to avail himself of this rare chance of climbing his pet legendary crag. His hands were full of botanical specimens from the sea, and, in his fervid way, he descanted upon them, and upon the geology of the coast, in a manner which I am sorry to

say, was almost lost to my uninitiated mind. I took the opportunity of inquiring where he found the materials for his tradition. He answered, that there was no doubt of its fundamental truth; "but, as to the details wrought into the story," said he, pointing to his forehead, with a laugh, "I found them in a cellar, deep down in the rock there."

The gloomy mass was surrounded by a little moat of salt water, nearly knee-deep, through which we passed; and then, clinging to its Triton locks of sea-weeds, we climbed to the slippery peaks of "Penny Stone." The stout lad in attendance drew a bottle from his basket; and then each in his way celebrated this unexpected meeting in that singular spot, where we should never meet together again.

I shall never forget the sombre splendour of the scene, nor the striking appearance of the group upon that lonely rock, when the rearward hues of day were yielding their room to "sad succeeding night." We lingered there awhile; but the air was cold, and the sea began to claim its own again. Four then returned by the cliffs to Blackpool, and the rest crossed the sands hastily to Norbreck, where, after an hour's chat by the old fisherman's great kitchen fire, I crept to bed, with the sound of the sea in my ears.

CHAPTER III.

A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry. Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll: masters, spread yourselves.
—MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

THE "million-fingered rain was tapping at the kitchen window as I sat by "Owd England's" bright hearthstone one forenoon, hearkening to the wind that moaned outside like a thing in pain. I could hear by a subdued thump that "Lizzy" was churning in the dairy; and I knew, by the smell of fresh bread which came from a spacious out-kitchen, that "Granny" was baking. "Little Tom," the cow lad, had started early with the cart to Poulton for coals, making knots on his whiplash as he went along, to help his memory, which was crowded with orders to call at one place for meal, at another for mutton, and at others for physic, and snuff, and such like oddments, wanted by the neighbours. "Owd England" had gone to the seaside, with his

staff, and his leather strap, to fetch the daily "burn" of firewood; and—to see what he could see;—for every tide brought something. One day he hauled a barrel of Stockholm tar from the water; on another, part of the cabin furniture of an unfortunate steamer; and then a beam of pine was thrown ashore; in all of which the old man had a certain interest as "wreck-master." "Peg-leg," the fisherman, was mending a net; and lame Alice lay, as usual, wrapped up, and in shadow, on the couch under the window; with her pale face, and a nose "as sharp as a pen," turned to the ceiling; while Tib, with her soft legs folded under, lay basking luxuriously in the fire-shine, dreaming of milk and of mice. The old clock ticked audibly in the corner, and a pin-drop silence prevailed in the room. "That's a fine cat," said I. "Aye," replied old Alice, "isn't it a varra fine cat? It's mother to that as Missis Alston hes. It cam fra Lunnon, an' it's worth a deeal o' money, is that cat. The varra day as you cam, it weshed it face an' sneez't twice,—it dud, for sewer. Missis Eastwood wor gettin' dinner ready at th' time, an' hoo said, 'We'st hev a stranger fra some quarter this day, mind i' we hevn't;' an' directly after, yo cam walkin' into th' heawse, I tell yo, just as nowt were. I offens think it's queer; bod I've sin cats as good as ony almanac for tellin' th' weather, an sich like." "Will it scrat," said I, stroking "Tib" as she stretched and yawned in my face. "Well," replied Alice, "it's like everything else for that; it just depends what you do at it. Bod I can onser for one thing—it'll not scrat as ill as 'Th' Red Cat' at Bispham does. I hev sin folk a bit mauled after playin' wi' that." "Aye, an' so hev I, too," said old "Peg-leg." "I ca'd theer tother neet, an', by the hectum, heaw they wor gooin' on, to be sewer. I crope into a corner wi' my gill, there wor sich liltin' agate; an', ye knaw, a mon wi' one leg made o' wood and tother full o' rheumatic pains is nowt mich at it. Beside, I've ten a likin' to quietness,—one does, ye knaw, Alice, as they getten owd. I geet aside ov a mon as wor tellin' abeawt Jem Duck'orth, o' Preston, sellin' his midden. Ye'll hev heeard o' that, Alice?" "Nay, I don't know as I hev, Billy; what is it? I dud hear at once th' baillies were in his heawse, an' they agreed to go away if he'd find 'em a good bondsman. So Jem towd 'em that he had a varra respectable old friend i'th next room that he thowt would be bund wi him to ony amount; if they'd let him fotch him. So they advised him to bring his bond in at once, an' hev it sattle't

baat ony bother—for th' baillies wor owd friends o' Jem's, ye knaw; an' they didn't want to be hard with him. Well, what does Jem do, bod go an' fotch a great brown bear as he'd hed mony a year, an' turns it into th' place where th' baillies were, baat muzzle; and says, 'Gentlemen, that's my bondsman.' Bod, never ye mind if th' baillies didn't go through that window, moor sharper. . . . I've heard mony a queer tale o' Jem. What's this abaat th' midden, Billy?" "Well, ye knaw, Jem wor a good-tempered mon, but full o' quare tricks. He wor varra strong, an' a noted feighter—th' cock o'th clod in his day, for that. An' he kept a deeal o' horses that he leet aat for hire. Well, he'd once gether't a good midden together fra th' stables, an' farmers began o' comin' abaat th' yard to look at it; so one on 'em says, 'Jem, what'll to tak for th' midden?' 'Five paand,' says Jem. 'Well, I'll gi' tho five paand,' says the farmer. So he ped him, an' said he'd send th' carts in a day or two. In a bit, another comes an' axes th' price o'th' midden. Jem stack to owd tale, an' said 'Five paand, an' cheeop too;' an' th' farmer gev him th' brass at once. 'Sowd again,' says Jem, 'an' th' money drawn.' Well, at th' end of o', it happen't at both sets o' carts cam for th' midden o'th same day, an' there were the devil's delight agate i'th yard between 'em. At last, they agreed to send for Jem; so he cam wi' a face as innocent as a flea, an' wanted to know whatever were to do. 'Didn't I buy this midden, Jem?' said one. 'Yigh, sure, thae did,' says Jem. 'Well, an' didn't I pay tho for't at th' same time?' 'Sure, thae did, owd lad—reet enough,' says Jem. 'Well, but,' says tother, 'didn't I buy it on tho?' 'Yigh, thae did,' says Jem, 'an' thae ped me for't, too, honourably, like a mon,—an' I'll tak very good care that nob'dy but yo two hes it.' That wor rayther awkert, ye knaw, an' I know not heaw they'd end it,—for Jem wor bad to manage. They wor tellin' it at th' 'Red Cat' tother neet, bod I could hardly hear for th' gam at wor afoot. Lor bless you! There wor a gentleman fra Fleetwood tryin' to donce i'th middle o'th floor; an' owd Jack Backh'us stood i' one corner, wi' his yure ower his face, starin' like wild, an' recitin' abaat th' Battle o' Waterloo. Three chaps sit upo' th' sofa as hed been ower Wyre, o' day, an' they'd etten so mich snig-pie at th' 'Shard,' that it hed made 'em say-sick, so Tom Poole were mixin' 'em stuff to cure it. Another were seawnd asleep on a cheer, an' little 'Twinkle,' fra Poulton, doncin' abeawt, challengin' him to

feight. An' it wor welly as bad eawtside, for there wor a trap coom up wi' a lot o' trippers as hed bin to Cleveless, an' 'Bugle Bob' upo' th' box, playin' 'Rule Britannia.' Bod I left when th' bevel-men fra Rossall began o' comin' in, singin' 'Said Dick unto Tom,' for I felt my yed givin' way under it."

The song, "Said Dick unto Tom," alluded to by the old man, is a rude fishing ditty, never printed before, and hardly known out of the Fylde, to which it relates. I wrote it down from the recitation of a friend near Norbreck. There is not much in the words except a quiet, natural tone, with one or two graphic strokes, which breathe the spirit of the country it originated from. The tune is a quaint air, which I never heard before. The song was written some time ago, by William Garlick, a poor man, and a weaver of "pow-davy," a kind of sail-cloth. These are the words:—

Said Dick unto Tom, one Friday at noon,
Loddle iddle, fol de diddle ido;
Said Dick unto Tom, one Friday at noon,
Aw could like to go a-bobbin' i'th mornin' varra soon.
To my heigho, wi' my bob-rods an' o';
Loddle iddle, fol de diddle ido.

Then up i'th mornin Dick dud rise,
Loddle iddle, &c.;
Then up i'th mornin' Dick dud rise,
An' to Tom's door like leetnin' flies.
To my heigho, wi' my worm-can an' o';
Loddle iddle, &c.

So, up Tom jumped, an' deawn th' stairs dart,
Loddle iddle, &c.;
So, up Tom jumped, an' deawn th' stairs dart,
To go a-gettin' dew-worms afore they start.
Wi' my heigho, an' my worm-can an' o';
Loddle iddle, &c.

Then they hunted, an' rooted, an' sceched abaat,
Loddle iddle, &c.;
Then they hunted, an' rooted, an' sceched abaat,
Egad, says little Tom, there's noan so many aat,
To my heigho, wi' my worm-can an' o';
Loddle iddle, &c.

So, off they set wi' th' bob-rods i' hond,
Loddle iddle, &c.;
So, off they set wi' th' bob-rods i' hond,
Like justices o' peace, or governors o' lond.
To my heigho, wi' my snig-bags an' o';
Loddle iddle, &c.

An' when they gat to Kellamoor, that little country place,
Loddle iddle, &c.;
An' when they gat to Kellamoor, that little country place,
Th' childer were so freeten't 'at they dorsn't show their face.
To my heigho, wi' my bob-rods an' o';
Loddle iddle, &c.

An' when they gat to Brynin', folk thought there'd bin a mob,
Loddle iddle, &c.;
An' when they gat to Brynin', folk thought there'd bin a mob,
Till little Tommy towd 'em they were bod baan to bob.
To my heigho, wi' my snig-bags an' o';
Loddle iddle, &c.

An' when they gat to Warton, they wor afore the tide,
Loddle iddle, &c.;
An' when they got to Warton, they wor afore the tide,
They jumped into a boat, an' away they both did ride.
To my heigho, wi' their bob-rods an' o';
Loddle iddle, &c.

Soon after dinner the clouds broke, and it was fine again. I went to the sea-side; and, after pacing to and fro by the waves a while, I struck out towards Rossall, through the by-paths of a wilderness of sand and tall grass, called "Starrins," that run along the edge of the cliffs. I had scarcely gone a mile before "the rattlin' showers drave on the blast" again, and the sky was all thick gloom. Dripping wet, I hurried towards the hotel at Cleveless, and, darting in, got planted in a snug arm-chair by the parlour fire, watching the storm that swept furiously aslant the window, and splashed upon the road in front. Three other persons were in the room, one a workman from Rossall College, hard by, and the other commercial men on their route to Fleetwood. It is wonderful how much rough weather enhances the beauty of the inside of a house. "Better a wee bush than nae bield." Well, we were just getting into talk, when the door opened, and a humorous face looked in. It was a bright-eyed middle-aged man, shining all over with wet; a blue woollen apron was twisted round his waist, and he had a basket on his arm. Leaning against one door-cheek, and sticking a knife into the other, he said, "By gobs, didn't I get a fine peltin' out o' that! . . . Do yees want any oysters, gentlemen? The shells is small," said he, stepping forward, "but they're chock full o' the finest fish in the world. Divul a aiqual thim oysters has in the wide ocean; mind, I'm tellin' ye. . . . Taste that!"—"Hollo, Dennis!" said one of the company, "how is it you aren't in Fleetwood?"—"Well, because I'm here, I suppose," said Dennis. "Bedad, ye can't expect a man to be in two places at once—barrin' he was a burd. Maybe it's good fortune sent me here to meet wid a few rale gintlemin. Sorra a one I met on the way, but rain powrin' down in lashins till the oysters in my basket began to think they were in the say again."—"Well, Dennis," said the traveller, "I'll have a score if you'll tell us

about the Irishman in the cook's shop."—Ye will? Then divul recave the toe I'll stir till ye get both. . . . Will you take another score, sir,—till I tell the tale? It's little chance ye'll have o' meetin' thim oysters agin—for they're gettin' scarce. . . . An' now for the tale," said he, with his knife and his tongue going together. "It was a man from Nenagh, in Tipperary—he was a kind o' ganger on the railway; an' he wint to a cook-shop in a teawn not far from this, an' says he to the missis o' the heawse, 'A basin o' pay-soup, ma'am, plaze,' says he,—for, mind ye, an Irishman's natterally polite till he's vext, an' thin he's as fiery as Julius Sayzur. Well, whin she brought the soup, Paddy tuk a taste mighty sly; an', turnin' reawnd, says he—just for spooart, mind—says he, 'Bedad, ma'am, your soup tastes mighty strong o' the water.' Well, av coorse, the woman was vext all out, an' she up an' tould him he didn't understand good aitin', an' he might lave the soup for thim that had bin better eddicated. But bowld Paddy went on witheawt losin' a stroke o' the spoon; an'—purtindin' not to hear her—says he, 'I'll go bail I'll make as good broth as thim wud a penny candle an' a trifle o' pepper.' Well, by gobs, this riz the poor woman's dander to the full hoight, an' she made right at him wid her fist, an' swore by this an' by that, if he didn't lave the heawse she'd knock him into the boiler. But Paddy was nigh finishin' his soup, an' he made up his mind to take the last word; an' says he, 'Bi the powers! that'll be the best bit o' mate ever went into your pan, ma'am;' an' wi' that, he burst into a laugh, an' the philanderin' rogue up an' towld her how he said it all for divarshun; an' divul a better soup he tasted in his life. Well, she changed her tune, like a child. Bedad, it was like playin' a flute, or somethin'. An', mind ye, there's nothin' like an Irishman for gettin' the right music out of a woman—all the world over. So my tale's inded, an' I'd like to see the bottom o' my basket. Ye may as well brake me, gintlemen. There's not more nor five score. Take the lot; an' let me go home; for I've a long step to the fore, an' I'm wet to the bone; an' the roads is bad after dark."

CHAPTER IV.

Still lingering in the quiet paths.
—ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

AFTER a good deal of pleasantry, Dennis got rid of his oysters; and, as the storm was still raging without, he called for a glass, just, as he said, "to keep the damp away from the spark in his heart, more by token that he had no other fire to dry his clothes at. But, begorra, for the matter o' that," said he, "they're not worth a grate-full o' coals. Look at my trousers. They're on the varge o' superannuation; an' they'll require a substitute before long, or else, I'm thinking, they'll not combine daycently. How an' ever, gintlemen," continued he, "here's hopin' the fruition of your purses may never fail ye, nor health to consign their contents to utility. An' neaw," said he, lighting his pipe, and putting the empty basket on his head like a cowl, "I must go, if the rain comes in pailfuls, for I'm not over well; an' if I could get home wud wishin', I'd be in bed by the time ye'd say 'trap-sticks!' But dramin' an' schamin's neither ridin' nor flyin', so I'll be trampin', for there's no more use in wishin' than there would be in a doctor feelin' a man's pulse through a hole in a wall wid the end of a kitchen poker. An' neaw, I'll be proud if any gintleman will oblige me by coming a couple o' mile an the road, to see the way I'll spin over the greawnd. . . Ye'd rather not? Well; fun an' fine weather's not always together, so good bye, an' long life to yees!" and away went Dennis through the rain towards Fleetwood.

Waiting for the shower to abate, I sat a while; and, as one of the company had been to a funeral, it led to a conversation about benefit societies; in relation to which, one person said he decidedly objected to funeral benefits being allowed to people who had died by their own hands, because it would encourage others to commit suicide. From this we glided to the subject of consecrated ground; and a question arose respecting a man who had been accidentally buried partly in consecrated and partly in unconsecrated ground,—as to what result would ensue from that mistake to the poor corpse in the end of all. The doubt was as to whose influence the unconsecrated half came

under. The dispute ran high, without anybody making the subject clearer, so I came away before the shower was over.

Next day I went to Blackpool; and, while awaiting at the station the arrival of a friend of mine, I recognised the familiar face of an old woman whom I had known in better days. Tall and thin, with a head as white as a moss-crop, she was still active, and remarkably clean and neat in appearance. Her countenance, though naturally melancholy, had still a spice of the shrew in it. "Eh," said she, "I'm glad to see you. It's seldom I have a chance of meeting an old face now, for I'm seldom out." She then told me she had been two years and a half housekeeper to a decrepid old gentleman and his two maiden sisters, in a neighbouring town. "But," said she, "I'm going to leave. You see I've got into years; and, though I'm active—thank God—yet, I'm often ill; and people don't like to be troubled with servants that are ill, you know. So I'm forced to work on, ill or well; for I'm but a lone woman, with no friends to help me, but my son, and he's been a long time in Canada, and I haven't heard from him this three years. I look out for th' postman day by day,—but nothing comes. Sometimes I think he's dead. But the Lord knows. It's like to trouble one, you're sure. It's hard work, with one thing and another, very; for I 'have to scratch before I can peck,' as th' saying is, and shall to th' end o' my day, now. But if you can hear of anything likely, I wish you would let me know,—for leave yonder I will. I wouldn't stop if they'd hang my hair wi' diamonds,—I wouldn't indeed. I've said it, an' signed it,—so there's an end. But what, they'll never ask me to stop, I doubt. It's very hard. You see I have to keep my son's little boy in a neighbour's house,—this is him,—and that eats up nearly all my bit o' wage; and where's my clothing to come from? But, don't you see, yon people are greedy to a degree. Lord bless you! They'd skin three devils for one hide,—they would for sure. See yo; one day—(here she whispered something which I didn't exactly catch)—they did indeed! As Missis Dixon said, when I met her in Friargate, on Monday forenoon, 'It was a nasty, dirty trick!' But I've had my fill, an' I shall sing 'Oh, be joyful' when my time's up. I shall be glad to get to my own country again,—yes, if I have to beg my bread. See; they're actually afraid of me going out o'th house for fear I should talk about them to th' neighbours. Bless you, they judge everybody by

theirselves. But I'd scorn the action! It is just as Missis Smith said, 'They're frightened o'th world being done before they've done wi' th' world,'—they are for sure. Such gripin', grindin' ways! They'll never prosper,—never." "And is this your grandson?" said I. "Yes; an' he's a wonderful child for his age. He's such a memory. His father was just same. I often think he'd make a rare 'torney, he remembers things so, and he has such queer sayings. I've taught him many a piece off by heart. Come, George, say that little piece for this gentleman. Take your fingers out of your mouth. Come now." The lad looked a minute, and then rattled out,—

Said Aaron to Moses, aw'll swap tho noses;—

"Oh, for shame," said she; "not that." But he went on,—

Said Moses to Aaron, thine's sich a quare un.

"For shame," said she. "You see they teach him all sorts o' nonsense; and he remembers everything. Come, be quick; 'Twinkle, twinkle,'" But here the train was ready; and in five minutes more she was on her way to Preston; and, not finding my friend, I walked home along the cliffs.

In my rambles about Norbreck, I met with many racy characters standing in relief among their neighbours, and marked with local peculiarities, as distinctly as anything that grows from the soil. In a crowded city they might be unnoticed; but, amid "the hamlet's hawthorn wild," where existence seems to glide as noiselessly as a cloud upon a summer sky—save where friendly gossips meet, like a choir of crickets, by some country fire—they are threads of vivid interest woven into the sober web of life; and, among their own folk, they are prized something like those old books which people hand from generation to generation,—because they bear the quaint inscriptions of their forefathers. In my wanderings I had also the benefit of a genial and intelligent companion; and, whether we were under his own roof, among books, and flowers, and fireside talk about the world in the distance, or roving the green lanes and coppice-trods, chatting with stray villagers by the way, or airing ourselves in the wind, "on the beached margent of the sea," I found pleasure and assistance in his company, in spite of all our political differences. My friend, Alston, lives about a mile down the winding road from Norbreck, in a substantial hall, built about a hundred years ago, and pleasantly dropt at the foot of a great natural

embankment, which divides the low-lying plain from the sea. The house stands among slips of orderly garden and plantation, with poultry yards and outhouses at the north-east end. The green country, sparely sprinkled with white farmhouses and cottages, spreads out in front, far and wide, to where the heathery fells of Lancashire bound the eastward view. The scene is as quiet as a country church just before service begins, except where the sails of a windmill are whirling in the wind, or the fleecy steam-cloud of a distant train gushes across the landscape, like a flying fountain of snow. On a knoll behind the house there is a little rich orchard, trimly hemmed in by thick thorn hedges. In March I found its shadeless walks open to the cold sky, and all its holiday glory still brooding patiently down in the soil; but I remember how oft, in summer, when the boughs were bending to the ground with fruit, and the leaves were so thick overhead, that the sunshine could only find its way through chinks of the green ceiling, we have pushed the branches aside, and walked and talked among its bowery shades; or, sitting on benches at the edge of the fish-pond, have read and watched our floats, and hearkened the birds, until we have risen, as if drawn by some fascination in the air, and gone unconciously towards the sea again. There we have spent many a glorious hour; and there, at certain times of the day, we should meet with "Quick," or "Mitch," or some other coast-guardsmen belonging to the gun-boat's crew at Fleetwood, pacing to and fro, on the look-out for Frenchmen, smugglers, and wreck. As we returned from the shore one afternoon last March, an old man was walking on the road before us, carrying what looked in the distance like two milk pails. These he set down now and then, and looked all round. My friend told me that this part of the Fylde was famous for singing-birds, especially larks. He said that bird-catchers came from all parts of Lancashire, particularly Manchester, to ply their craft there; and he would venture a guess that the quaint figure before us was a Manchester bird-catcher, though it was rather early in the season. When we overtook the old man, who had set down his covered cages in a by-lane, we found that he was a bird-catcher, and from Manchester, too. I learnt, also, that it was not uncommon for a clever catcher to make a pound a day by his "calling."

The primitive little whitewashed parish church of Bispham was always an interesting object to me. It stands on a knoll,

about a quarter of a mile over the fields from Norbreck; and its foundation is of great antiquity. Its graveyard contains many interesting memorials, but none more solemnly eloquent than a certain row of green mounds covering the remains of the unknown drowned washed upon that coast from time to time. Several of these, which drifted ashore after the burning of the *Ocean Monarch* off the coast of Wales, in 1848, now lie mouldering together in this quiet country graveyard, all unknown, save a lady from Bury, in Lancashire, to whose memory a tombstone is erected here.

As the great tides declined, the weather began to be troubled with wintry fits; but when the day of my return came, it brought summer again. After dinner, at Bispham House, I went up with my friend to bid farewell to "Owd England" at Norbreck; and it was like parting with some quaint volume of forgotten lore. Nursed here in the lap of nature, the people and customs of the country were part of himself; and his native landscape, with all the shifting elements in the scene, was a kind of barometer, the slightest changes of which were intelligible to him. At the eastern edge of Norbreck, a low wall of coble stones encloses his garden. Here, where I have sometimes made a little havoc among his "Bergamots," "Old Keswicks," and "Scotch Bridgets," we walked about, whilst I took a parting look at the landscape. Immediately behind us the sea was singing its old song; and below lay the little rural parish, "where," as I heard the rector say in one of his sermons, "a man cannot walk into the open air but all his neighbours can see him." Beyond, the tranquil Fylde stretches out its drowsy green, now oblivious of all remembrance of piratical ravage, which so often swept over it in ancient times. Yonder, the shipping of Fleetwood is clearly in sight to the north. And there, a sunbeam, stealing between the fleecy clouds, glides across the land from field to field, with a kind of plaintive grace, as if looking for a lost garden. Over meadow, over wood, and little town it goes, dying away upon yon rolling hills in the east. The first of these hills is Longridge, and behind it, weird old Pendle, standing in a world of its own, is dimly visible. Northward, the hills roll on in bold relief, Parlick, and Bleasdale, and the fells between Morecambe and "time-honoured Lancaster." Still northward, to where yon proud brotherhood of snow-crowned giants—the mountains of Cumberland and Westmorland—look so glorious in the sunlight; awaking enchanting dreams of that land of romance, the "Lake

District," hallowed by so many rich associations of genius. They toss their mighty heads on westward, till solemn old "Black Coombe" dips into the Irish Sea. Altogether a fine setting for the peaceful scene below.

The afternoon was waning, so, taking leave of the old fisherman and his household, I turned from Norbreck like a man who rises from his dinner before he is half satisfied. Accompanied by my friend, I walked four miles, on highways and by-ways, to meet the train at Poulton. The road was pleasant, and the day was fine; and I reached Manchester before midnight, feeling better in soul and body for my sojourn by the sea.

Wandering Minstrels;

OR,

Wails of the Workless Poor.

For whom the heart of man shuts out,
Straightway the heart of God takes in,
And fences them all round about
With silence, 'mid the world's loud din.
And one of his great charities
Is music; and it doth not scorn
To close the lids upon the eyes
Of the weary and forlorn.
—James Russel Lowell.

THERE is one feature of the distress in Lancashire which was very remarkable upon the streets of our large towns during the year 1862. I allude to the wandering minstrelsy of the unemployed. Swarms of strange, shy, sad-looking singers and instrumental performers, in the work-worn clothing of factory operatives, went about the city, pleading for help, in touching wails of simple song,—like so many wild birds driven by hard weather to the haunts of man. There is something instructive, as well as affecting, in this feature of the troubled time. These wanderers are only a kind of representative overflow of a vast number whom our streets will never see. Any one well acquainted with Lancashire will know how wide-spread the study of music is among its working population. Even the inhabitants of our large towns know something more about this now than they knew a few months ago. I believe there is no part of England in which the practice of sacred music is so widely and lovingly pursued amongst the working people as in the counties of Lancashire and

Yorkshire. There is no part of England where, until lately, there have been so many poor men's pianos, which have been purchased by a long course of careful savings from the workman's wages. These, of course, have mostly been sold during the hard times, to keep life in the owner and his family. The great works of Handel, Haydn, Beethoven, and Mozart, have solaced the toil of thousands of the poorest working people of Lancashire. Anybody accustomed to wander among the moorlands of the country will remember how common it is to hear the people practising sacred music in their lonely cottages. It is not uncommon to meet working men wandering over the wild hills, "where whin and heather grow," with their musical instruments, to take part in some village oratorio many miles away. "That reminds me," as tale-tellers say, of an incident among the hills, which was interesting, though far from singular in my experience. Up in the forest of Rosendale, between Derply Moor and the wild hill called Swinshaw, there is a lone valley,—a green cup in the mountains,—called "Dean." The inhabitants of this valley are so notable for their love of music, that they are known all through the vales of Rossendale as "Th' Deighn Layrocks," or "The Larks of Dean." In the twilight of a glorious Sunday evening, in the height of summer, I was roaming over the heathery waste of Swinshaw, towards Dean, in company with a musical friend of mine, who lived in the neighbouring clough, when we saw a little crowd of people coming down a moorland slope, far away in front of us. As they drew nearer, we found that many of them had musical instruments; and when we met, my friend recognised them as working people living in the district, and mostly well known to him. He inquired where they had been; and when they told him that they had "bin to a bit of a sing deawn i'th Deighn," "Well," said he, "can't we have a tune here?" "Sure, yo con, wi' o' th' pleasur' i'th world," replied he who acted as spokesman; and a low buzz of delighted consent ran through the rest of the company. They then ranged themselves in a circle around their conductor, and they played and sang several fine pieces of psalmody, upon the heather-scented mountain top. As those solemn strains floated over the wild landscape, startling the moorfowl untimely in his nest, I could not help thinking of the hunted Covenanters of Scotland. The all-together of that scene upon

the mountains, "between the gloaming and the mirk," made an impression upon me which I shall not easily forget. Long after we parted from them we could hear their voices, softening in sound as the distance grew, chanting on their way down the echoing glen; and the effect was wonderfully fine. This little incident upon the top of Swinshaw is representative of things which often occur in the country parts of Lancashire, showing how wide-spread the love of music is among the working classes there. Even in great manufacturing towns, it is very common, when passing cotton mills at work, to hear some fine psalm tune streaming in chorus from female voices, and mingling with the spoom of thousands of spindles. The "Larks of Dean," like the rest of Lancashire operatives, must have suffered in this melancholy time; but I hope that the humble musicians of our county will never have occasion to hang their harps upon the willows.

Now, when fortune has laid such a load of sorrow upon the working people of Lancashire, it is a sad thing to see so many workless minstrels of humble life "chanting their artless notes in simple guise" upon the streets of great towns, amongst a kind of life they are little used to. There is something very touching, too, in their manner and appearance. They may be ill-shod and footsore; they may be hungry, and sick at heart, and forlorn in countenance; but they are almost always clean and wholesome-looking in person. They come singing in twos and threes, and sometimes in more numerous bands, as if to keep one another in countenance. Sometimes they come in a large family all together, the females with their hymn-books, and the men with their different musical instruments,—bits of pet salvage from the wrecks of cottage homes. The women have sometimes children in their arms, or led by the hand; and they sometimes carry music-books for the men. I have seen them, too, with little handkerchiefs of rude provender for the day. As I said before, they are almost invariably clean in person, and their clothing is almost always sound and seemly in appearance, however poor and scanty. Amongst these poor wanderers there is none of the reckless personal negligence and filth of hopeless reprobacy; neither is there a shadow of the professional ostentation of poverty amongst them. Their faces are sad, and their manners very often singularly shame-faced and awkward; and any careful observer would see at a glance that these people were altogether unused to the craft of the trained minstrel of the streets. Their clear,

healthy complexion, though often touched with pallor,—their simple, unimportunate demeanour, and the general rusticity of their appearance, shows them to be

> Suppliants who would blush
> To wear a tatter'd garb, however coarse;
> Whom famine cannot reconcile to filth;
> Who ask with painful shyness, and refused,
> Because deserving, silently retire.

The females, especially the younger ones, generally walk behind, blushing, and hiding themselves as much as possible. I have seen the men sometimes walk backwards, with their faces towards those who were advancing, as if ashamed of what they were doing. And thus they went wailing through the busy streets, whilst the listening crowd looks on them pityingly and wonderingly, as if they were so many hungry shepherds from the mountains of Calabria. This flood of strange minstrels partly drowned the slang melodies and the monotonous strains of ordinary street musicians for a while. The professional gleeman "paled his ineffectual fire" before these mournful songsters. I think there never was so much sacred music heard upon the streets of Manchester before. With the exception of a favourite glee now and then, their music consisted chiefly of fine psalm tunes,—often plaintive old strains, known and welcome to all, because they awaken tender and elevating remembrances of life. "Burton," "French," "Kilmarnock," "Luther's Hymn," the grand "Old Hundred," and many other fine tunes of similar character, have floated daily in the air of our city for months together. I am sure that this choice does not arise from the minstrels themselves having craft enough to select "a mournful muse, soft pity to infuse." It is the kind of music which has been the practice and pleasure of their lives; and it is a fortuitous thing that now, in addition to its natural plaintiveness, the sad necessity of the times lends a tender accompaniment to their simplest melody. I doubt very much whether Leech's minor tunes were ever heard upon our streets till lately. Leech was a working man, born near the hills, in Lancashire; and his anthems and psalm tunes are great favourites among the musical population, especially in the country districts. Leech's harp was tuned by the genius of sorrow. Several times, lately, I have heard the tender complaining notes of his psalmody upon the streets of the city. About three months ago I heard one of his most pathetic tunes sung in the market-place, by an old man and two young

women. The old man's dress had the peculiar hue and fray of factory work upon it, and he had a pair of clogs upon his stockingless feet. They were singing one of Leech's finest minor tunes, to Wesley's hymn:—

> And am I born to die,
> To lay this body down?
> And must my trembling spirit fly
> Into a world unknown?
> A land of deepest shade,
> Unpierced by human thought;
> The dreary country of the dead,
> Where all things are forgot.

It is a tune often sung by country people in Lancashire at funerals; and, if I remember right, the same melody is cut upon Leech's gravestone, in the old Wesleyan chapelyard at Rochdale. I saw a company of minstrels of the same class going through Brown-street the other day, playing and singing,—

> In darkest shades, if Thou appear,
> My dawning is begun.

The company consisted of an old man, two young men, and three young women. Two of the women had children in their arms. After I had listened to them a little while, thinking the time and the words a little appropriate to their condition, I beckoned to one of the young men, who came "sidling" slowly up to me. I asked him where they came from, and he said, "Ash'n." In answer to another question, he said, "We're o' one family. Me an' yon tother's wed. That's his wife wi' th' chylt in her arms; an' hur wi' th' plod shawl on's mine" I asked if the old man was his father. "Ay," replied he; "we're o' here, nobbut two. My mother's ill i' bed, an' one o' my sisters is lookin' after her." "Well, an' heaw han yo getten on?" said I. "Oh, we'n done weel; but we's come no moor," replied he. Another day, there was an instrumental band of these operatives playing sacred music close to the Exchange lamp. Amongst the crowd around, I met with a friend of mine. He told me that the players were from Stalybridge. They played some fine old tunes, by desire, and, among the rest, they played one called "Warrington." When they had played it several times over, my friend turned to me and said, "That tune was composed by a Rev. Mr. Harrison, who was once minister of Cross-street Unitarian Chapel, in Manchester; and one day an old weaver, who had come down from the hills, many miles, staff in hand, knocked at the minister's door, and

asked if there was 'a gentleman co'de Harrison lived theer?' 'Yes.' 'Could aw see him?' 'Yes." When the minister came to the door, the old weaver looked hard at him for a minute, and said, 'Are yo th' mon 'at composed that tune co'de Warrington?' 'Yes,' replied the minister, 'I believe I am.' 'Well,' said the old weaver, 'gi' me your hond! It's a good un!' He then shook hands with him heartily again; and, saying 'Well, good day to yo,' he went his way home again, before the old minister could fairly collect his scattered thoughts.

I do not know how it is that these workless minstrels are gradually becoming rarer upon the streets than they were a few months ago. Perhaps it is because the unemployed are more liberally relieved now than they were at first. I know that, now, many who have concealed their starving condition are ferreted out, and relieved as far as possible. Many of these street wanderers have gone home again, disgusted, to pinch out the hard time in proud obscurity; and there are some, no doubt, who have wandered away to other parts of England. Of these last, we may naturally expect that a few may become so reconciled to a life of wandering minstrelsy, that they may probably never return to settled labour again. But "there's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will." Let us trust that the Great Creator may comfort and relieve them, "according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions."

A Wayside Incident during the Cotton Famine.

Take physic, pomp!
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel;
That thou may'st shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.
—King Lear.

ONE Saturday a little incident fell in my way, which I thought worth taking note of at the time. On that day I went up to Levenshulme, to spend the afternoon with an old friend of mine, a man of studious habits, living in a retired part of that green suburb. The time went pleasantly by whilst I was with the calm old student, conversing upon the state of Lancashire, and the strange events which were upheaving the world in great billows of change,—and drinking in the peaceful charm which pervaded everything about the man, and his house, and the scene which it stood in. After tea, he came with me across the fields to the Midway Inn, on Stockport Road, where the omnibuses call on their way to Manchester. It was a lovely evening, very clear and cool; and twilight was sinking upon the scene. Waiting for the next omnibus, we leaned against the long wooden watering-trough, in front of the inn. The irregular old building looked picturesque in the soft light of declining day; and all around was so still that we could hear the voices of bowlers who were lingering upon the green, off at the north side of the house, and retired from the highway by an intervening garden. The varied tones of animation, and the phrases uttered by the players on different parts of the green, came through the quiet air with a cheery ring. The language of the bowling-green sounds very quaint to people unused to the game.

"Too much land, James!" cries one

"Bravo, bully-bowl! That's th' first wood! Come again for more!" cries another.

"Th' wrong bias, John!"

"How's that?"

"A good road, but it wants legs!"

"Narrow; narrow, o' to pieces!"

These, and such like phrases of the game, came distinctly from the green into the highway in that quiet evening. And here I am reminded, as I write, that the philosophic Dr. Dalton was a regular bowler upon Tattersall's green, at Old Trafford. These things, however, are all aside from the little story which I wish to tell.

As we stood by the watering-trough, listening to the voices of the bowlers, and to the occasional ringing of bells, mingled with a low buzz of merriment inside the house, there were many travellers walked by. They came, nearly all of them, from the Manchester side; sometimes three or four in company, and sometimes a lonely straggler. Some of them had poor-looking little bundles in their hands; and, with a few exceptions, their dress, their weary gait, and dispirited looks, led me to think that many of them were unemployed factory operatives, who had been wandering away to beg where they would not be known. I have met so many shame-faced, melancholy people in that condition during the last few months, that, perhaps, I may have somewhat overjudged the number of those who belong to that class. But, in two or three cases, little snatches of conversation, uttered by them as they went by, plainly told that, so far as the speakers went, it was so; and at last a little thing befel which, I am sure, represented the condition of many a thousand more in Lancashire just now. Three young women stopped on the footpath in front of the inn, close to the place where we stood, and began to talk together in a very free, open way; quite careless of being overheard. One of them was a stout, handsome young woman, about twenty-three. Her dress was of light printed stuff, clean and good. Her round, ruddy arms, her clear, blonde complexion, and the bright expression of her full, open countenance, all indicated health and good nature. I guessed from her conversation, as well as from her general appearance, that she was a factory operative, in full employ—though that is such a rare thing in these parts now. The other two looked very poor and downhearted. One was a short,

thick-set girl, seemingly not twenty years of age; her face was sad, and she had very little to say. The other was a thin, dark-haired, cadaverous woman, about thirty years of age, as I supposed; her shrunk visage was the picture of want; and her frank, childlike talk showed great simplicity of character. The weather had been wet for some days previous; and the clothing of the two looked thin and shower-stained. It had evidently been worn a good while, and the colours were faded. Each of them wore a poor, shivery bit of shawl, in which their hands were folded, as if to keep them warm. The handsome lass, who seemed to be in good employ, knew them both; but she showed an especial kindness towards the eldest of them. As these two stood talking to their friend, we did not take much notice of what they were saying, until two other young women came slowly from townwards, looking poor, and tired, and ill, like the first. These last comers instantly recognised two of those who stood talking together in front of the inn, and one of them said to the other,—

"Eh, sitho; there's Sarah an' Martha here! Eh, lasses; han *yo* bin a-beggin', too?"

"Aye, lass; we han," replied the thin, dark-complexioned woman. "Aye, lass; we han. Aw've just bin tellin' Ann, here. Aw never did sich a thing i' my life afore,—never! But it's th' first time and th' last, for me,—it is that! Aw'll go whoam; an' aw'll dee theer, afore aw'll go a-beggin' ony moor,—aw will for sure! Mon, it's sich a nasty, dirty job; aw'd as soon clem! . . . See yo, lasses; we set off this mornin'—Martha an' me—we set eawt this mornin' to go to Gorton Tank, becose we yerd that it wur sich a good place. But one doesn't know wheer to go to these times; an' one doesn't like to go a-beggin' among folk at they known. Well, when we coom to Gorton we geet twopence-hawpenny theer,—an' that wur o'. There's plenty moor beggin' beside us! Well, at after that twopence-hawpenny, we geet twopence moor; an' that's o' at we'n getten. But, eh, lasses, when aw coom to do it, aw hadn't th' heart to ax for nought,—aw hadn't for sure. . . . Martha an' me's walked aboon ten mile, if we'n walked a yard; an' we geet weet through th' first thing; an' aw wur ill when we set off, an' so wur Martha, too; aw know hoo wur; though hoo says nought mich abeawt it. Well; we coom back through t' teawn; an' we wur both on us fair stagged up. Aw never wur

so done o'er i' my life, wi' one thing an' another. So we co'de a-seein' Ann here; an' hoo made us a good baggin'—th' lass did. See yo; aw wur fit to drop o'th flags afore aw geet that saup o' warm tay into mo,—aw wur for sure! An' neaw hoo's come'd a gate wi' us hitherto, an' hoo would make us have a glass o' warm ale a-piece at yon heawse, lower deawn a bit; an' aw dar' say it'll do mo good, aw getten sich a cowd; but, eh dear, it's made mo as mazy as a tup; an' neaw hoo wants us to have another, afore we starten off whoam. But it's no use; we mun be gooin'. Aw'm noan used to it, an' aw connot ston' it. Aw'm as wake as a kittlin' this minute."

Ann, who had befriended them in this manner, was the handsome young woman, who seemed to be in work; and now the poor woman who had been telling the story laid her hand upon her friend's shoulder and said,—

"Ann, thae's behaved very weel to us, o' roads; an' neaw, lass, go thi ways whoam, an' dunnot fret abeawt us, mon. Aw feel better neaw. We's be reet enough to-morn, lass. Mon, there's awlus some way shap't. That tay's done me a deeol o' good. . . . Go thi ways whoam, Ann! Neaw do; or else aw shan't be yezzy abeawt tho!"

But Ann, who was wiping her eyes with her apron, replied, "Nawe, nawe; aw connot goo yet, Sarah!" . . . And then she began to cry, "Eh, lasses, aw dunnot like to see yo o' this shap,—aw dunnot for sure! Besides, yo'n bin far enough to-day. Come back wi' me! Aw connot find reawm for both on yo; but thee come back wi' me, Sarah! Aw'll find thee a good bed; an' thae'rt welcome to a share o' what there is—as welcome as th' flowers i' May—thae knows that. . . . . Thae'rt th' owdest o'th two; an' thae'rt noan fit to trawnce up an' deawn o' this shap. Come back to eawr heawse; an' Martha'll go forrud to Stopput (Stockport)—winnot tho, Martha? . . . Thae knows, Martha," continued she, "thae knows, thae munnot think nought at me axin' Sarah, an' noan o' thee. Yo should both on yo go back if aw'd reawm,—but aw haven't. Beside, thae'rt younger an' strunger than hoo is."

"Eh, God bless tho, lass," replied Martha, "aw know o' abeawt it. Aw'd rayther Sarah would stop, for hoo'll be ill. Aw can go forrud by mysel', weel enough. It's noan so fur, neaw."

But here Sarah, the eldest of the three, laid her hand once more upon the shoulder of her friend, and said, in an earnest tone,—

"Ann! It will not do, my lass! Goo, aw mun! Aw never wur away fro whoam o' neet i' my life—never! Aw connot do it, mon! Beside, thae knows, aw've laft yon lad; an' never a wick soul wi' him! He'd fret hissel' to deeoth this neet, mon, if aw didn't go whoam! Aw couldn't sleep a wink for thinkin' abeawt him! Th' child would be fit to start eawt o'th heawse i'th deeod time o'th neet, a-seechin' mo—aw know he would! . . . Aw mun goo, mon! God bless tho, Ann; aw'm obleeged to thee o'th same! But thae knows heaw it is."

Here the omnibus came up, and I rode back to Manchester. The whole conversation took up very little more time than it will take to read it; but I thought it well worth recording, as characteristic of the people now suffering in Lancashire from no fault of theirs. I know the people well. The greatest number of them would starve themselves to that degree that they would not be of much more physical use in this world, before they would condescend to beg. But starving to death is hard work. What will winter bring them when severe weather begins to tell upon constitutions lowered in tone by a starvation diet—a diet so different to what they have been used to when in work?

What will their eighteen-pence a-head weekly do for them in that hard time? If something more than this is not done for them, when more food, clothing, and fire are necessary to everybody, calamities may arise which will cost England a hundred times more than a sufficient relief—a relief worthy of those who are suffering, and of the nation they belong to—would have cost. In the meantime, the cold wings of winter already begin to overshadow the land; and every day lost involves the lives, or the future usefulness, of thousands of our best population.

Saint Catherine's Chapel;

OR,

The Pretty Island Bay.

O blest retreat, and sacred, too!
Sacred as when the bell of prayer
Tolled duly on the desert air.
And crosses decked thy summits blue.
—ROGERS.

THE shores of the Isle of Man are remarkable for their variety of indentation, especially at the southern end of the island. There its most interesting scenery may be found; bold, rugged headlands, beautiful bays, and savage ravines, where the wild ocean churns and thunders in majestic fury. But from the ruin-crested rock of Peel—so rich in venerable memorials of the past—all round the shores of "the fairy isle," there is not a more charming spot than Port Erin, a little crag-defended bay at the southern end of the island, about five miles west of Castletown. The outer shores of this part of the island are wildly fantastic; the mountains cluster grandest there, and the inland scenery is fertile and picturesque. Bold and rugged as the entrance to Port Erin is from the sea, all is quiet, and sweet, and sheltered at the head of the bay. The contrast is striking, and pleasing to the mind. The little fishing hamlet looks out contemplatively between those wild, flanking rocks at the entrance, across the blue waters, to where the mountains of Morne and Wicklow, in Ireland, show their faint outlines in the west. The bay, from the point where the headlands—Brada on the north side, and The Cassels on the south side of the entrance—front each other, like sentinels placed to guard the

little nest beyond from all ravage of the sea, is about half a mile across, and about a mile inland. From that point up to the hamlet at the head of the water, Port Erin is a pleasant seclusion, sweetly retired, even on the landward side, from bustle of any kind, except such as the sea makes when a strong west wind brings Neptune's white-maned horses into the little bay in full career. Then, indeed, Port Erin wears an aspect of a nobler and more spirit-stirring kind. But, even then, when the spray is flying over the thatched roofs of the fishermen's cottages, low down, near to the beach, the briny tumult is mere child's play in a nursery nook, compared to the roaring majesty with which the billows of the Atlantic wilderness rage among the creeks, and chasms, and craggy headlands outside. At such a time, the thunders of the sea in the Sound, which divides the Calf Island from the main land, and amongst the storm-worn headlands that overfrown the ocean immediately beyond the entrance to Port Erin, come upon the ear of the listener, in his pleasant shelter at the head of the bay, like the boom of distant war. But when the wind is still, the clear tide fondles up the beach at the foot of the village, as if it was glad to see that quiet nook of Mona's Isle once more. Lipping the delicately-mottled strand with liquid grace, it creeps lovingly up towards Port Erin's green shore. Full of beautiful sounds, and hues, and motions, it comes, with tender caresses, croodling its dreamy sea-song; and, as it rises in gentle sweeps nearer and nearer to the cottages where fishermen dwell, at the foot of the villaged slope, it flings fresh shells upon the sand with every surge,—like a fond traveller returning home laden with memorials of his journey, which show that he has been thinking of those he loved, when far away.

But let us sit down upon some pleasant "coigne of vantage" at the head of the bay, and look at the quaint little village there. The hotel, called the "Falcon's Nest," looks right out to sea from the head of the bay. It crowns a green slope of grass-bound sand, which rises from behind an irregular line of old thatched cottages upon the beach, not far from the head of the tide. There is a green terrace in front of the hotel at the head of the slope, where I have many a time sat and looked about me with delight upon a summer's day. At one end of the terrace there is a sun-dial; at the other a rusty old cannon,—a relic of the Spanish Armada. It was found in the water below Spanish Head, hard by Port Erin, where part of that

famous armament "came to grief." Great piles of fantastic sea-worn rock, partly overgrown with greenery, stand, here and there, upon the terrace; and ornamental seats are placed there, for the use of visitors, when the weather is fine. The chimney tops, and thatched roofs of fishermen's cottages, greened over with wind-sown verdure, peep up from the foot of the slope, which is crowned by the terrace. It is very pleasant to saunter about, there, on a fine summer's day—or on any other day,—to one who loves nature in all her moods. It is, perhaps, better still to sit down, and look lovingly upon the scene. The witchery of peace is on all around, when the wind is still; the smoke from cottage chimneys rises idly into the pure air—idle as Ludlam's dog, that leaned against a wall to bark. It rises, here and there, in lazy blue rings—lounging curls of fat blue smoke, that seem over-fed, and "done up" with pleasant lassitude, as if they had just finished a good dinner; and would rather have a nap before going out. The cottages of the village are picturesquely strewn about, as if they had been dropped through holes in a sack, by somebody who happened to be flying over the place. But they chiefly cluster on the south side at the head of the bay, about the bottom of the hill; not far from high water. They, then, straggle up the southern hill-side—like school children out for a holiday—one on this shelf of green land; another in a nook of the hill; another on the nose of a breezy bit of crag; others, in and out, dotting the sides of the mountain road, which leads through the hamlet of Creag-y-N'eash, in the direction of Spanish Head, and The Chasms,—the most remarkable bit of coast scenery in all the island. About the middle of the scattered village, a whitewashed chapel stands, in a little patch of ground, enclosed by low walls. It stands there, sweet and simple, by the side of the mountain road; about one hundred feet above the head of the tide; and it is a pleasing feature in the scene. The village is all under the eye from the place where I am sitting, and the quiet play of out-door life going on there is novel, and dreamy-looking. The whole scene is picturesquely-varied. The wild mountain tops, clustered in the direction of Fleshwick, as if in solemn council; the dark, craggy headlands at the mouth of the bay, with the blue sea heaving between; the smooth beach, where the clear tide is singing and surging up; the quiet, wandering village; and the green plain, rolling away between the hills, in picturesque

undulations, landward. Port Erin is enchanted ground! There are secluded nooks about it, that seem as if

> Some congregation of the elves,
> To sport by summer moons, had shaped them for themselves.

The village is all under the eye. Down in the lowmost part, where the cottages are nearest to the water, a blue-clad fisherman leans against his door cheek, smoking, and gazing dreamily out to sea. I wonder what the old man is thinking of. In front of another cottage, a stout matron, with browned face and brawny arms, is hanging up strips of conger eel, to dry in the sun; whilst a little barefooted lass, about five years old, staggers about the doorway, under the weight of a fat baby. A little below the sun-dial, which stands at the end of the green terrace, upon which I am sitting, a knot of Manx fishermen are lounging upon the grass, around a pitcher of the thin Manx ale, called "jough." Now they are very merry, and they laugh and chatter in full chorus, with great glee. Now their mirth subsides; and they draw around an ancient mariner, who is telling a tale of an adventure he had with the fairies, as he came over the mountain from Fleshwick Bay, one night. It is wonderful how firmly these islanders believe in fairies. Scratch deep enough into any Manxman, and you will find fairies, dancing by moonlight, amongst a world of other weird imaginations. But we will let the old seaman go on with his story. The village is all under the eye; and it is such a homely spot, that if one stays a few days there, and is at all disposed to be communicative, one begins to know everybody "by headmark," as the saying is—"Billy this," and "Johnny that," and "Neddy Omragh;" and the old wanderer from the neighbourhood of Pool Vash, who invariably recites a little epitaph he wrote upon some notable person in that quarter a few years ago; and who invariably expects something for reciting it. One begins to know the village folk "by headmark," as I have said before, and they stop and salute you kindly, and chat about the weather, the fishing, the crops, and such like; and there is something very homely and pleasant in feeling one's self thus linked in a kindly way to the rest of the human race wherever they go. . . . The village is all under the eye; and Port Erin is enchanted ground. The voices of nature are not drowned there in a roar

of human tumult. It is true that the unceasing murmur of the tide fills all the air with its wild under-song; but its influence is so fine and unobtrusive, that every sound of life in the little village comes upon the untroubled sense distinctly framed in the quietude which pervades that dreamy nook of Mona's Isle, when the wind is low. . . . Let us look around, and be silent; that one may hear what is going on. Behind me is the cheerful hotel, the Falcon's Nest. The landlord stands upon the door-step, giving directions about the stabling of certain horses which have come up from Castletown. The horses are taken round to the stables; and the landlord goes back into his nest. Snatches of the old man's fairy tales come upon the wind, when it blows, towards me. I hear broken bits of his story, while his mates stand listening around him, in silent wonder:—

"I wass not thinking about nawthin', when I think I hear somethin',—an' I look,—an' there was a little fellow close to my leg. He was dressed in green an' red, with silver buckles on his shooce. He wass about the sice of eight yearce. I make a grab to get howlt of him,—so,—an' then,—I get a hand-full of wind. I cannot see nawthin'. He is gone. . . . I wass wan day makin' a hedge. It was up in Brada. There wass nobody but myself. It was wonderful! Up in the air, I hear them, shouting an' laughing. I know in a minute it is the fairies. I hear them before, in the same place. They wass hunting. I hear the cap'en o' the fairies. He give a shout,—an' all was silence. Then the noice begin a-gain,—like people in a fair. I hear them so well as I do see my hant. They wass hunting. They have horses, an' dawgs. I hear them very well. The whips wass cracking, an' horns wass blowing,—an' I hear the little dawgs going wif! wif! wif! It wass wonderful! Then the cap'en give a shout a-gain,—an' all wass silence. Then there wass music. It wass so fine that I cannot hear it. But, I feel there wass music playing up in the air. . . . I know it is the fairies; and I say, 'I think it is time to be going home.' So, I come a-way. . . . Another time, when I wass coming down from Craig-y-N'eash, it come on dark, all at once,—so dark as pitch. I look at my side. There wass a little fellow. He wass just here (laying his hand upon his hip). He wass about so big as my leg. I know it was a fairy. It was not a body at all. He come to stale my boots." And so on. But

we let the old man finish his tale. . . . I can now hear the footfall of a lonely traveller, as he stumps along the road behind me, stick in hand. He is a stout, old, weather-beaten Manxman, with gray hair; and he is dressed in coarse blue woollen cloth. I can hear every footfall as he works his way along the silent road towards the mountain side, in the direction of Fleshwick Bay; and, now that I turn round to look at him again, I see that the old man is wiping his forehead, as he stumps along, stick in hand. I can hear women talking at their doors below the slope, and upon the cottage-sprinkled hill-side, in the direction of Creag-y-N'eash. I can hear the prattle of little bare-legged lads, who are sailing their tiny, chip-built ships, and clamorously discussing their relative qualities, as they watch how they fare among the eddies and rapids of the stream which runs down the green crease about the middle of the village. I can hear the cackle of a large family of very clean and very fat ducks, as they waddle and paddle, and splash the water about, and open their wings, and wag their dumpy tails with delight, upon the slushy margin of a pool, where the same streamlet has been dammed up, for their especial pleasure. I can hear the opening and shutting of cottage doors, in different parts of the village; and I can hear something of the wild fringe of an old Manx song, which a fisherman is crooning, as he saunters along the strand towards his boat; which lies, high and dry, in a sheltered nook, under the craggy cliff, at the south side of the bay. I can hear the call of the Manx shepherd to his dog, upon the dark mountain side, towards Brada Head. Each sound is distinctly-framed in the pervading quietness of the scene. At an open bow-window of the hotel behind me, two elderly gentlemen sit talking together, and evidently enjoying what little breeze there is from the sea. I have got it into my head, somehow, that they are men of learning. One of them is a stout, hearty-looking gentleman, who wears a black velvet skullcap; and likes to dine in his own room,—"because he has a good deal of writing to do." I wonder what he is writing about. He is talking in a sonorous tone of voice, to a dignified old friend of his, whose manners at table, I have noticed, always evince the self-possession, the graceful, quiet action, and kindliness which mark a cultivated gentleman. He

is tall and thin; and his noble aquiline nose sustains a pair of gold spectacles. Perhaps the black velvet skullcap and the gold spectacles have something to do with my notion that they are learned men; but I believe I am right, nevertheless. They are talking about the history of the island, and about the geology of this part of it; especially about the mines at Brada Head. I begin to think they have some interest in those Brada mines; for they are talking of the projected breakwater, and the possible future of Port Erin. I can hear them plain enough. Not that I like "eaves-dropping;" but there they sit, at the open window, and they see me; and they evidently don't care a rap who hears them. . . . At another window, a little farther off, two sunny-haired young ladies come and go, like wandering posies, "freshening and refreshing all the scene" with their sweet presence. They belong to some well-to-do family of cultivated people, who have come to Port Erin to bathe themselves in quietness, and in the fresh sea-breeze. I am sure it is so, for a noble-looking man, considerably past the noon of life, shows himself at the window, now and then, with two more of these pretty trailers clinging to him. He is dressed in black, and he wears a gold-framed double eye-glass; and his fine countenance is lighted up with a quiet smile, as he paces to and fro, listening to the prattle of the two lovely young women who have hold of him—body and soul. It is very evident that their prattle is music in his ears. . . . Now the mother comes! I am quite sure that placid, handsome, matronly woman, in the black silk dress, is the mother. She is a well-grown, sweet-looking, sound-constitutioned dame; round as an apple, and clear-skinned, and quietly-rosy; and kind-hearted, as anybody may see, at the first glance, with half an eye. I durst bet a thousand pounds she is a lady, in heart and thought. She has seen enough of the world to enrich her experience; and without hardening her heart. She is a good, womanly soul; the kindliness of her nature breathes through every pore; and speaks with angelic eloquence in every line and dimple of her face. A few silver threads may be shining in her yet abundant auburn hair, but they only serve to give a new tinge of dignity to her appearance. She knows something of sorrow, too, no doubt; for who can have lived so long in this world of ours as she has lived, without being touched by the divine wand

of that noble refiner of the noble heart? But the clouds have long since gone; and her smiles, now, are not smiles

That might as well be tears.

She is, indeed, "one vast substantial smile," from head to foot,—a sunbeam of feminine goodness, raising the atmosphere of happiness around her, wherever she goes. Upon the whole, her lines have evidently "fallen in pleasant places," and,—"So mote it be," say I, "to the end of a long life yet to come." Now she sits down by the open window; and a handsome, light-complexioned lad, about twelve years old, is teasing her in an affectionate way about something or another; whilst a beautiful, sunny-haired girl, of sixteen or so, leans over the other shoulder, and whispers, as she smooths the old lady's hair with tender touches, "Mamma, dear, this!" and "Mamma, dear, that!" And, oh, if there be an elysium on earth, that good old soul is in it now! It is a beautiful glimpse of the smooth current of human life.

Now I hear the clatter of horses' feet upon the road behind me, and a car comes up to the door of the hotel, laden with a company of young men, who are evidently "in great spirits." They have, very likely, come across the island from Douglas, making a call or two on the way. If one may measure their enjoyment by the noise they make, they certainly ought to be very happy. They alight and enter the hotel, whilst the car is taken round to the stable yard; and, in a few minutes, I hear a good deal more bell-ringing in the Falcon's Nest.

But who is this strange, gaunt fellow, that comes paddling barefoot up the slope, from the low part of the village, muttering to himself as he gazes vaguely around. It is poor Johnny Daly, the affectionate, lunatic youth, who wanders over hill and dale, in all weathers, harmless and happy in his unconscious helplessness. He is a tall, strong, young man; but quite a child in affectionate simplicity. Poor Johnny! He is only "mad nor-nor-west," after all. If he knows you, he either likes you well, or he doesn't like you at all. If he takes to you, he comes quietly up, and flutters about you like a pet dove with a broken wing; croodling all sorts of inarticulate kindnesses in a touching and not very demonstrative way; except that, now and then, as he listens to your talk—no matter what you are talking of, nor how badly—he suddenly clasps his hands and laughs boisterously;

as if he had just discovered a great joke in the matter. If he likes you, he will sit down upon the grass beside you, quietly crooning some wild fragment of old Manx song, and looking slyly up into your face from time to time; unless he chances to spy the landlord of the hotel, or the owner of the one mansion at Port Erin. If he sees either of these anywhere about, it is a thousand to one that he will immediately leave you to your own devices and desires, for the poor fellow knows who is kind to him a great deal better than some of us do who think that we have all our wits about us. Poor Johnny! He is fond of a penny, like most of the world; and he needs it more than some people do; although He "who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb" has scattered a few kind hearts about the wanderer's way that will not see him want for any needful thing. But I have seen people that Johnny would not accept a penny from; and I have many a time wondered at the curious principle of selection which seemed to lurk in some corner of his disordered mind. I remember a little excursion we made, one fine summer's day, over the mountain on the south side of Port Erin, and among the wild cliffs, near the Sound, which divides the Isle of Man from The Calf. It was a company of six; and amongst them was the landlord of the hotel—a kind-hearted and intelligent Englishman. Johnny followed him, barefoot, all the rugged way, with the affectionate instinct of a faithful dog. As we returned homeward, by wandering, and sometimes dangerous tracks, along the edge of the precipices, on the south side of the bay—where the sea roared and dashed majestically among lonely creeks two or three hundred feet below, and the cormorant and seagull wheeled about the dark crags, and screamed with delight in the breeze, half-way down between us and the water—our host disappeared from the company for a little while, in search of something among the rocks, whilst Johnny was picking his way carefully up the prickly path ahead. Turning round, Johnny missed his friend; and after he had looked for him again and again through the company, and all over the scene, he sat himself down amongst the heather, and gazing quietly at the blue sea, he murmured, in a plaintive tone, "Now, he is gone! He is gone!" . . . In a minute or two, he kneeled down among the heather, and, clasping his hands, like a child at its mother's knee, he muttered a few broken sentences of the Lord's prayer, and then he sat down and gazed silently at the sea again. And we could not

get him to rise, until his friend reappeared from behind a rock; when he instantly rose and clapped his great brown hands, and trotted after us, with painful steps, through the prickly bush, stopping, now and then, to laugh aloud. . . . Poor Johnny! As he comes paddling up the road from the village, he hears the voice of the landlord, who is talking to the ostler at the house end; and away he goes, in full trot, towards his friend, with whom he is a great favourite.

And now, mild evening begins to draw her delicate curtains over the drowsy world. All things below the sky are softening into shade; and the pensive spell deepens the charm that pervades this sleepy seaside nook of "Mona the lone, where the silver mist gathers." The quiet life of the village is sinking to repose. Barefooted lasses are fetching water from the ancient well of Saint Catherine,—a beautiful spring, at the foot of the sandy slope at the head of the bay; and an object of great veneration to the inhabitants of the island. Lovers are stealing off to quiet nooks outside the village; where they can whisper unseen. Boats are coming in from the Sound, and from the blue sea beyond. The fishermen haul them ashore in a sheltered shingly nook, under the craggy southern cliffs; and then they saunter homeward along the smooth beach, laden with fish and fishing tackle; some of them singing drowsily, as they saunter along. The murmurs of the sea become more distinct, filling all the air with a slumbrous influence. . . . Now the fisher's wife beets up her cottage fire, sweeps the hearth, and puts the kettle on, to cheer her sea-beaten mate on his return from the wild waters; and, here and there, fresh smoke is rising again from cottage chimneys; bluer and more briskly than in the glowing afternoon. . . . The old fisherman and his village companions are mustering upon the grass at the end of the terrace again. He has long since finished the story about his adventure with the fairies among the mountains; and he has been carousing with his comrades in the taproom of the Falcon's Nest. They have brought another pitcher of "jough" out with them. And, listen! They are beginning to sing, in chorus, the plaintive old Manx song, called "Molly Charrane!" The strange melody floats up, weird and sweet, blending beautifully with the murmurs of the rising tide, and waking up remembrances of the wild history and wilder legends of "Mona's fairy isle." The broad glare of day is gone. The air is clearer; the green fields look

greener; and the hues of the landscape are richer and more distinct than before. The sun has "steeped his glowing axle" in the sea. The gorgeous hues which linger over his track still glow upon the wide waters; but "the line of light that plays along the smooth wave toward the burning west," is slowly retiring in the wake of the sunken sun. Let me look out, while there is yet light, for the eye has glorious scope to roam in, from the place where I am sitting. . . . At the head of the bay—the scattered village; and the green land—green all along the slopes of the hills, and all over the fertile undulant plain between, stretching away inland, towards Castletown. It is a pleasant nook of seaside life, at the head of the bay. But, as I look seaward, the flanking headlands grow wilder as they recede, ending in scenes of savage grandeur among the storm-worn crags which front the open sea.

> The cliffs and promontories there,
> Front to front, and broad and bare,
> Each beyond each, with giant feet
> Advancing, as in haste to meet.
> The shattered fortress, whence the Dane
> Blew his loud blast, and rushed in vain,
> Tyrant of the drear domain.

Those grim sentinels have seen strange scenes of storm, and battle, and shipwreck, during their long watch over the entrance to Port Erin. Oft has the ancient Dane steered his "nailed bark," laden with sea-robbers, into that little bay; and he has oft been wrecked upon that craggy coast. Spanish Head overfrowned the destruction of part of the great Armada. One of the guns of that armament now lies upon the terrace in front of the hotel at Port Erin; thickly encrusted with rust. Many a noble ship has gone down in the Sound between the Island and the Calf of Man. . . . As twilight deepens down, the breeze freshens, and the blue waves begin to heave with life. Great white-winged ships glide majestically by—some near, some far off; and some almost lost to sight in the distance. Far away, in the west, the outlines of the mountains of Morne and Wicklow are fading away from view. It is a bewitching hour! It is a bewitching scene! But now the Irish mountains have disappeared in the shade; and the distant sea grows dim to the eye. The village about me is sinking to rest; and candle-lights begin to glimmer through cottage windows. The old fisherman and his companions have gone back into the taproom of the Falcon's

Nest. The wind is rising still; and the air grows cold. I, too, will retire until the world has donned its night-dress; and so good-by to this fairy scene for a while! The moon rises at ten! Perhaps I may come forth to look around me once more, when the world lies sleeping beneath her quiet smile. If not, then farewell to thee, Port Erin!

When scenes less beautiful attract my gaze,
I shall recall thy quiet loveliness;
When harsher tones are round me, I shall dream
Of those mysterious notes, whose thrilling sounds
Peopled the solitude

The Knocker-Up.

Past four o'clock; and a moonlight morning!
—Old Watchman.

LIFE in Manchester may seem monotonous to a Parisian or to a Londoner, but it has strong peculiarities; and among its varied phases there are some employments little known to the rest of the world. Many a stranger, whilst wandering through the back streets of the city, has been puzzled at sight of little signboards, here and there, over the doors of dingy cottages, or at the head of a flight of steps, leading to some dark cellar-dwelling, containing the words, "Knocking-Up Done Here." To the uninitiated this seems a startling, and unnecessary announcement, in such a world as ours; and all the more so, perhaps, on account of the gloom and squalid obscurity of the quarters where such announcements are generally found. Horrible speculations have haunted many an alien mind whilst contemplating these rude signboards, until they have discovered that the business of the Knocker-Up is simply that of awakening people who have to go to work early in a morning; and the number of these is very great in a city like ours, where manufacturing employments mingle so largely with commercial life. Another reason why this curious employment is so common in Manchester may be that there are so many things there to lure a working man into late hours of enjoyment,—so many wild excitements that help to "knock him up," after his ordinary work is over, and when his time is his own, so many temptations to "lengthen his days by stealing a few hours from the night," that the services of the morning "Knocker-Up" are essential.

For the factory-bell, like death, is inexorable in its call; and when, in the stillness of the morning, the long wand of the awakener comes tapping at the workman's window, he knows that he must rise and go; no matter how ill-prepared,—no matter how mis-spent his night may have been. He must go; or he knows full well the unpleasant consequence. If he likes he may try to ease his mind by crooning the words of that quaint lyric, "Up in a morning, na for me;" but, in the meantime, he must get up and go. He may sing it as he goes, if he likes; but whether he does so or not, he must walk his chalks, or else it will be worse for him. Apart from factory-workers, there are other kinds of workmen who need awakening in a morning; especially those connected with the building trades, whose hours of rising are sometimes uncertain, because they may be employed upon a job here to-day, and then upon one two or three miles off, to-morrow. Factory workers, too, are compelled, in many cases, to reside at considerable distances from the mills at which they are employed. These two classes of working people, however, are the principal customers of the "Knocker-Up."

Whoever has seen Manchester in the solitary loveliness of a summer morning's dawn, when the outlines of the buildings stand clear against the cloudless sky, has seen the place in an aspect of great beauty. In that hour of mystic calm, when the houses are all bathing in the smokeless air,—when the very pavement seems steeped in forgetfulness, and an unearthly spell of peaceful rapture lies upon the late disturbed streets,—that last hour of nature's nightly reign, when the sleeping city wears the beauty of a new morning, and "all that mighty heart is lying still;"—that stillest, loveliest hour of all the round of night and day,—just before the tide of active life begins to turn back from its low-most ebb, or, like the herald drops of a coming shower, begins to patter, here and there, upon the sleepy streets once more; whoever has seen Manchester at such a time, has seen it clothed in a beauty such as noontide never knew. It is, indeed, a sight to make the heart "run o'er with silent worship." It is pleasant, even at such a time, to open the window to the morning breeze, and to lie awake, listening to the first driblets of sound that stir the heavenly stillness of the infant day:—the responsive crowing of far-distant cocks; the chirp of sparrows about the eaves and neighbouring house-tops; the barking of dogs; the

stroke of some far-off church clock, booming with strange distinctness through the listening air; a solitary cart, jolting slowly along, astonished at the noise it is making. The drowsy street—aroused from its slumbers by those rumbling wheels—yawns and scratches its head, and asks the next street what o'clock it is. . . . Then come the measured footsteps of the slow-pacing policeman, longing for six o'clock; solitary voices conversing in the wide world of morning stillness; the distant tingle of a factory bell; the dull boom of escaping steam, let off to awake neighbouring workpeople; the whistle of the early train; and then,—the hurried foot, and "tap, tap, tap!" of the Knocker-Up. Soon after this, shutters begin to rattle, here and there; and the streets gradually become alive again.

He who has wandered about the city, with observant eye, at dawn of morning, may have seen men—and sometimes a woman—hurrying along the street, hot-foot, and with "eyes right," holding aloft long taper wands, like fishing-rods. These are Knockers-Up, going their hasty rounds, from house to house, to rouse the workman to his labour. They are generally old men, who are still active on foot; or poor widows, who retain sufficient vigour to enable them to stand the work; for it is an employment that demands not only severe punctuality, but great activity: there is so much ground to cover in so little time. It is like a "sprint-race"—severe whilst it lasts, but soon over. And the aim of the Knocker-Up is to get as many customers as possible within as small a circle as possible,—which greatly lessens the labour. A man who has to waken a hundred people, at different houses, between five and six o'clock, needs to have them "well under hand," as coachmen say. With this view, Knockers-Up sometimes exchange customers with one another, so as to bring their individual work as close together as possible. The rate of pay is from twopence to threepence per week for each person awakened; and the employment is sometimes combined with the keeping of a coffee-stall at some street end, where night stragglers, and early workmen, can get their breakfast of coffee and bread-and-butter, at the rate of a halfpenny per cup, and a halfpenny per slice for bread-and-butter. Sometimes, also, the Knocker-Up keeps a little shop in some back street, where herbs, and nettle beer, and green grocery, or fish, or children's spices are sold; and, after this fashion, many poor, faded folk,—too proud for pauperism,—eke out a thin,

unostentatious living, out of the world's eye. So much for the occupation of the Knocker-Up. And now for a little incident which led to all this preamble.

The other day, as I sat poring over my papers, a startling knock came to the street door. It was one, solid, vigorous bang,—with no nonsense about it. It was heavy, sharp, straightforward, and clean-cut at the edges,—like a new flat-iron. There was no lady-like delicacy about it,—there was no tremulous timidity, no flabbiness, nor shakiness, nor billiousness, nor any kind of indication of ill-condition about that rap. It was sound—wind, limb, and all over. It was short and decisive,—in the imperative mood, present tense, and first person,—very singular; and there was no mistake about its gender—it was, indeed, massively masculine—and it came with a tone of swift authority—like a military command. It reminded me of "Scarborough warning,"—a word and a blow—and the blow first. That rap could stand on its own feet in the world,—and it knew it. It came boldly, alone, "withouten any companie,"—not fluttering, lame and feeble, with feeble supporters about it,—like a man on ricketty stilts, that can only keep his feet by touching carefully all round. It shot into the house like a cannon-ball, cutting a loud tunnel of strange din through the all-pervading silence within. The sleepy air leaped, at once, into wakefulness,—and it smote its forehead with sudden amazement, and gazed around to see what was the matter. I couldn't tell whatever to make of the thing. My first thought was that it must be the man who examines the gas meters, and that he was behind with his work, and in a bad temper about something. And then I began to think of my debts: it might be an indignant creditor, or some ruthless bully of a dun—which is a good deal worse—and I began to be unhappy. I sighed, from the bottom of my heart, and looked round the room in search of comfort Alas! there was nothing there to cheer my sinking spirits. The drowsy furniture had started from its long-continued trance; and the four somnolent walls were staring at one another with wild eyes, and whispering, "What's that?" The clock was muttering in fearful undertones to the frightened drawers; and the astonished ceiling, as it gazed down at the trembling carpet, whispered to its lowly friend, "Look out!" as if it thought the whole house was coming down. I looked at my watch—for, indeed, I hardly knew where to look—and I began to apprehend

that the fatal hour had come, at last, when we should have to part,—perhaps for ever. I looked at my poor old watch. . . . It had stopped. . . . The fact is, the little thing was stunned. The numerals had tears of terror in their eyes; and it held out its tiny hands for protection,—like a frightened child, flying to its mother from a strange tumult. I felt sorry for the little thing; and I rubbed the case with my coat sleeve, and then wound it gently up, by way of encouragement; and—the grateful, willing creature—it only missed about half a dozen beats or so, and then began ticking again, in a subdued way, as if it was afraid of being overheard by the tremendous visitor who had so furiously disturbed "the even tenor of its way." The whole house was fairly aroused; tables, chairs, pictures,—all were in a state of extraordinary wonderment. The cat was the only thing that kept its senses. It rose from the hearth, and yawned, and stretched itself; and then it came and rubbed its glossy fur soothingly against my leg, and whispered, "All serene! Don't faint!" In the meantime, I could imagine that rap,—as soon as it had delivered the summons,—listening joyfully outside, and saying to itself, with a chuckle, "I've wakened that lot up, for once!" . . . At last I mustered courage, and, shaking myself together, I went to the door.

A little, wiry old man stood at the door. His clothing was whole, but rough, and rather dirty. An old cloth cap was on his grey head; and he was in a state of curious disorder from head to toe. He had no braces on; and he was holding his trousers up with one hand. I couldn't tell what to make of him. He was a queer-looking mortal; and he had evidently "been dining," as the upper ten thousand say when any of their own set get drunk. At the first glance, I thought he was begging; but I soon changed my mind about that, for the hardy little fellow stood bolt upright, and there was not the shadow of anything like cringing or whining about him. The little fellow puzzled me. He looked foggy and dirty; but he had an unmistakable air of work and rugged independence. Steadying himself with one hand against the door-cheek, he muttered something that I couldn't make out.

"Well; what is it?" said I.

Again he muttered something that sounded like "Knocked Up;" to which I mildly replied that he certainly looked as if he

was so; and then I inquired what I could do for him; but, to my astonishment, this seemed to vex him. At last I found that he was a Knocker-Up, and that he had called for his week's "brass." I saw at once that the old man was astray; and the moment I told him where he was, his eyes seemed to fill with a new light, and he exclaimed, "By th' mon, aw'm i'th wrang street!" And then, holding his trousers up, still, with one hand, away he ran, and was no more seen by me.

The Complaint of a Sad Complaint.

To the Editor of the Weekly Growl.

SIR,—I am a nuisance, and therefore I suppose it is right, in the abstract, that I should be put down. Unfortunately, however, many of the persons and things by which I am surrounded are the same to me, and I feel, by fits, vastly inclined to extinguish them, although I know full well, in my sane moments, that they are generally useful. And so it is, right to the end of the piece; everything and everybody is, by turns, a nuisance to everybody and everything else; and if there were no restraint upon the public vanity, and private pique, and officious frivolities which affect these conflicting elements, the whole body politic, being composed of nuisances, would be destroyed, like the Irish cats in the story. In fact, sir, there is nobody in the world that is not a nuisance to somebody; though that is hardly a sufficient reason why they should be allowed to worry one another. But in these days, the art and mystery of grumbling—that native prerogative which has grown up so luxuriantly in the soil of our English freedom, that the grumblers now constitute an eminently valuable power in the state—the art and mystery of grumbling (it really is artful and mysterious sometimes) is now growing into a kind of social scurvy, more annoying than serviceable, and sometimes exceeding in offensiveness the nuisances which it scratches into notice. The contagion is getting to such a pitch just now, that it is time for the nuisances to speak for themselves—for even a nuisance has a right side—and although I myself am one, I shall be grateful if you will allow me—just this once—to say a few words

respecting the treatment to which many of my humbler brethren are subjected by the magnates of the tribe. I feel the more hopeful that you will grant this, since I know that I am not the only nuisance to which you have, with admirable forbearance, opened the columns of your excellent journal.

Happily, the expression of opinion is so free in this country, that—although some offensive persons deny that a nuisance has the slightest right to appeal to *any* of the senses—I will venture to assert, backed by all known law and custom, that even a nuisance has a right to be *heard*—at least, *in its own defence;* thanks to that instinctive leaning to fair play which, while it deprecates anything that is foul, yet acknowledges that even foulness itself may, sometimes, have a fair side. My dear sir, we nuisances have endured so much, as we may say, from those of our own household, that the patience of the most Christian nuisance in the world must give way under such an incessant fire of impertinent insult. Ah me! there seems to be so little fellow-feeling amongst nuisances now-a-days, that it may be worth while to remind them all of the poet's little sermon beginning,—

> O wad some power the giftie gie us,
> To see ourselś as ithers see us.

Nuisance-hunters are always, of course, a nuisance to the nuisances; but the hunters are so often worse, upon the whole, than the hunted, that it would be a general benefit to hold up the mirror to these inconsiderate grumblers a little now and then. To whom, then, in this difficulty, can we appeal, but to you, oh Mr. Editor? who are yourself a very rock of offence to some misguided persons; who are, doubtless, a stumbling-block to you.

How the theme widens as one pursues it. There is something comical about the pathology of public grumbling. Is it not a fact well known to you, my dear sir, that there exists an inexhaustible class of persons who, having little or no capacity for distinguishing themselves publicly in any nobler fashion, and fearing, above all things, that obscurity which is their natural destiny, are constantly racking their wits for something to write to the papers about. How many such have you, yourself, sir, out of the sheer kindliness of your nature—not unmixed with a certain sense of the humour of the thing—lent a little fame to, by deigning, occasionally, to embalm their crude frivolities in your own clear "nonpareil" To such persons, anything will

serve for a subject, if they can only twist it into the shape of a complaint: strong smells, and strange smells, which are not strong; suspicious loiterers in lonely places; gaslight when the moon shines, and want of gas when a cloud happens to be passing over the moon; flying chips from masons' chisels, which have been stopt in their flight by the rubicund tip of some respectable gentleman's nose; bits of orange peel on the flags; public clocks that are too fast, or too slow, or are stopt altogether, or have their fingers bent, or the faces of which are partly hidden by the encroaching insignia of ambitious pawnbrokers, or are in places where they are not needed, or *are not* in places where they *are* needed; pavements which are too slippery for horses, and too rough for ladies; music to people who have no ear for it, and noises to people who have a delicate ear for music, and either to people who like neither; mutually-discordant neighbours; church bells that are not rung, and church bells that are rung too much, and church bells that are not melodious when they are rung; holes in the street, and places where holes are likely to be, sometime; too much water, and too little water; cockle shells; broken pots; the smell of dinners floating up from hotel kitchens; and the inarticulate wails of chip-sellers and fish women; want of loyalty to the crown; want of loyalty to the people; the insolence of cabmen, and railway buffers; sneezing during service-time; fast-days, proposed by people who are ill with feasting, and feast-days, proposed by people who are ill with fasting; general holidays, proposed by those who are paid for their holidays, and objected to by those who are not paid for them; and a thousand other things, more insignificant even than these; sometimes ferreted out by ingenious old fogies, of an irritable disposition, who go tooting about the streets, "finding things out;" or by young "green" persons, driven to their wits' end by a kind of literary measles. Heaven knows, I do not wish to "freeze the genial current" of such poor souls as these latter, but then, Mr. Editor, we must draw the line somewhere. With respect to the former, have I not seen such a self-elected old nuisance inspector, going slowly along the street, groping with his sharp proboscis for something in the morning air to grumble about in graceful prose, and meeting with a smell which he did not quite understand—a smell which perhaps had travelled "ever so far" before it met him, and was on its way into the country, there to die peaceably upon the general air, if he had only

allowed it to go—he straightway halts, he sniffs at it carefully—he affiliates it upon something convenient—he looks grave—he whips out a pocket-book, and makes a note, to be wrought into an epistolary complaint at leisure, in the fervent hope of its appearing among Saturday's correspondence. Have I not known persons, whose jangled senses, refusing the Lethæn balm of sleep, have lain awake o' nights, listening indignantly to the weird howls of libidinous cats, prowling about the back yards, and the rigging of the house, and making the sleepless midnight doubly hideous with their "shrill ill will,"—who have started up irritably from their pillow at last, and, striking a match, have exclaimed, "Drat that cat! Why don't the police look after these things? I will write to the papers." In fact, sir, the extravaganzas of public complaint are endless in variety, and, not unfrequently, very unreasonable.

I know a manufactory of a certain kind, which was established many years ago, in a spot as remote as was convenient, and wholly uninhabited for some distance around, in the hope of being free from the charge of anything in the shape of nuisance; but, as years rolled on, population gathered about it, and grumbling began, which, by irregular fits, has been carried on ever since; and whenever the complaint could manage to get a "respectable start," it was sure to be well followed up; without thought, as such cries often are. Even in the papers of the last few days, letter after letter has appeared, complaining of the effluvia arising from certain alum works in Salford. Some of these letters are written by gentlemen whose delicate nasal discrimination amounts to a marvel, if not to a miracle, when we remember the distance they live from the spot complained of. How on earth any smell, such as the one alluded to by these gentlemen, can manage to travel two mortal miles, in a high wind, working its passage through a hundred other smokes and smells as it goes, and still preserve its own individuality, surpasses me to know. But so it is. Up to Kersall Moor, and other green nooks of nestling, miles off, where the human nose is critical, this compact nuisance cleaves its way through the murky air, keeping wonderfully free from communion with the elements it passes through, and strikes the senses at that distance as distinctly as if it were a flat-iron. It seems to hold itself in till it has found out noses which can appreciate it, and then it "comes out strong," evidently making an effort to reveal all the pent-up

pungency of its nature, in the hope of gaining a little respectable distinction. It is an aristocratic smell, too. It likes good society, and will associate with none but gentlemanly noses. It has to travel for it, though; for, like the prophets, it is not honoured with any remarkable notice in its own neighbourhood. Now, noses such as these are "something like," as the saying is; and, but for such noses, how on earth should we, who live amongst it, be able to discriminate one smell from another in the complication of odours which crowd the air of this busy district,—except in such cases as the town's manure yard, which overpowers everything else for a mile around with its intolerable native strength,—is strong enough, indeed, in the height of summer, "for a man to hang his hat upon," as the Irish say. That, now, is a smell really worth notice, if it were only possible to get an alderman or two to speak about it.

When it happens to be fashionable to raise an outcry against any particular manufacturer, as in the case of these unfortunate alum works, what is that manufacturer to do? Is he to take up his works and walk, from one locality to another, every time an inconsiderate complaint happens to be made against him? Is he to become a kind of nomadic outcast? Is he to betake himself to utter solitude, and go from one "desert where no men abide" to another "desert where no men abide"—a manufacturing voice, crying for orders in the wilderness, and finding none—until his occupation becomes unprofitable to himself or anybody else?

And then, the tone in which complaint after complaint has been uttered, in the case of these works in Salford, is rather curious. "*The* Nuisance in Pendleton!" That is the title of more than one letter on the subject. "*The* Nuisance in Pendleton!" Good heavens! Who art thou, O man, that writeth thus? Oh, happy Pendleton, with *one* nuisance! Go thy ways, and break forth into singing, thou pleasant, and, in some places, rather green suburb,—break forth into singing, even from Windsor Bridge right away up Eccles Old Road, and in every other direction, to the utmost extent of thy remarkable borders,—break forth into singing! Thou with the long pole standing near the church, and the cock upon the top of it,—rejoice, and give thanks, for thy extraordinary exemption from the common troubles of this manufacturing locality! And well might Pendleton sing, if this were true; but who does not know how many things which are really useful and necessary, are not

always pleasant to those who have no immediate interest in them? Who does not know that if everything which is a nuisance to somebody or another, at one time or another, were removed from society, there would be hardly anything useful left in society at all,—and if all the nuisances in society were to cry out in this way, at once, against each other, who knows where it would end? They would cleave the general ear with horrid grumbling. Really, gentlemen who get their living by the necessary infliction of unpleasant noises, and smokes, and steams, and smells, upon people who are forced to live among them because they live, in a certain sense, by them, should be a little more considerate. They should, at least, remember that, although they can leave the town, and live in palatial houses, situated in pleasant spots, "far removed from noise and smoke," where the air is so beautifully different that it makes them a little particular, they leave their own share of the nuisances of the town behind them, to be patiently endured by an immense multitude of people who cannot escape from them,—if they wish to live,—and who, although they are just the people who suffer most from them, are, also, just the people who would be the least heeded if they were to cry out against them.

I am, Sir,

Yours truly,

A SAD COMPLAINT.

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